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CONTRA COSTA PARK COUNCIL

PARK COUNCIL NEWS

Vol. 73, No. 1 January 1973

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JAN 19 1973

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Newsletter of the Contra Costa Park Council, P.O. Box 4322, Walnut Creek, CA 94596.
Editor: Patrick Whittle, 176 Waterman Circle, Danville, CA 94526 (Phone 837-3478).
President: William S. Dickinson, Jr., 4261 Brentwood Circle, Concord, CA 94521 (Phone 689-4474).

DECEMBER BOARD MEETING HEARS GLAD TIDINGS

Raydean Randlett

Success set the tone of the Park Council board meeting on December 21 -- great news for conservationists who sometimes feel as if they're frantically "sticking fingers in dikes", as President Bill Dickinson describes it.

The greatest success of the day was Reagan's signing of Peter Behr's Wild Rivers Bill. Joann Johnson, who has been vigorously following the progress of SB107 for at least two and one-half years, said simply, "It passed." No champagne or celebration! Joann went on to announce that EBRPD Directors voted to buy 2123 acres on the northeast flank of Mt. Diablo for $902,275 or $425 per acre. The Coal Mines acquisition fulfills the last of the commitments made to Contra Costa county when EBRPD annexed to the Park District.

Peg Kovar's good news was that Walnut Creek now has a model park dedication ordinance. Peg also enjoyed the sight of many ten dollar bills sliding her way as she reminded board members that NOW was the time to make that $5.00 per person donation to Save Mt. Diablo! She assures us good wine, cheese for sustenance, a slide show, and a photography display on January 7 from 3:00-9:00 p.m. at Heather Farms. See you there!

Bill Dickinson moved that the two vacancies on the Board of Directors be filled by:

1. Minot Tripp -- a recent Congressional candidate and highly regarded tax expert who will be a great asset to the Council

and

2. Raydean Randlett -- a volunteer to aid Pat Whittle who has produced this Newsletter single-handedly for some 8 years

Both Mike and I were pleased to join forces with such a FORCE!

Al Burton reminded board members that perhaps THE MOST IMPORTANT THING to do in January is to fill your car with warm bodies to crowd the January 23rd meeting of the Board of Supervisors in Martinez. If you've never attended one of these meetings, I guarantee an experience you won't forget! It's difficult to put enough stress on the importance of having the Supervisors FEEL the presence of concerned citizens. They really react.

Al also mentioned the matter of horse facilities in regional parks. More about this in January.

Mike Tripp asked for the Council's support of Lafayette's proposed park dedication ordinance. A motion was passed stating that the Park Council supports all such ordinances that are as strong as the one proposed by the League of California Model Cities.

The last item of g[illegible]ews came in the form of a request from Dan Clancey to have his students subscribe to the Park Council News in lieu of one of their textbooks. The Council passed a motion stating that for $1.00 students could subscribe through June and for $2.00 become full student members.

We welcome new readers and also any suggestions or additions you may have to make the News must reading for every conservationist in Contra Costa County. How about giving your friend a gift subscription or submitting a list to us of people who should be reading the News?

PLEASE RECORD THESE IMPORTANT DATES!

See stories for details.

January 7 - 3:00-9:00 p.m. - Wine tasting to save the mountain.

January 11 - 7:45 p.m. - Sierra Club meeting on State Water Plan (PERIPHERAL CANAL) held in multi-purpose room at Acalanes High School.

January 16 - 2:45 p.m. - Board of Supervisors hearing on Kaiser Quarry.

January 18 - 8:00 p.m. - PARK COUNCIL MEETING at C. C. Water Bldg., Concord Ave. (All meetings will be held on 3rd Thursday in Water Bldg.)

January 19 - Copy deadline for Park Council News.

January 20 - All Day Frank's Tract Work Party.

January 23 - 2:15 p.m. - Board of Supervisors, MORGAN TERRITORY ESTATES.

January 27 - Round Top Regional Park - trail blazing

NEW ORDINANCE FOR SEWAGE PROTECTS BAY

People who "pollute" sewage with contaminants such as acids, oils and dyes soon will have to pay a heavy premium for the privilege. According to EBMUD General Manager John S. Harnett, the approval of new regulations, embodied in a waste-water control ordinance, will impose strict controls on sewage strengths and will be a major development in the drive to clean up San Francisco Bay. The new ordinance enables EBMUD to levy treatment charges on the basis of sewage strength as well as volume. Dischargers with wastes more expensive to treat will be required to pay higher rates to cover their share of costs for cleaning up sewage from the nine communities served by EBMUD. "What we're aiming at," said Harnett, "is having the ability to control the quality of wastes entering our treatment plant, so that we can meet Federal and State water quality standards with the effluent that we release into the Bay."

AGONIZING AGREEMENT REACHED

The Alameda County Planning Commission directed EBRPD and Columbia Associates of Hayward to work out an agreement regarding the construction of a 1.5 mile subdivision access road across Cull Canyon Regional Recreation Area. After a year of negotiations Dr. Arthur Emmes, Chairman of the EBRPD Citizens' Task Force sub-committee reviewing the matter, observed that it was a rather agonizing decision to concur in the agreement although it may triple the size of the park and contains "many goodies".

EBRPD TO PIONEER?

Orville P. Ball, El Cajon aquatic resources expert, suggested that if 100 recommendations that he made during the course of a 17-month study are implemented, "this District could easily evolve as one of the national pioneers in what we now appreciate as an evolving specialized profession -- lakes recreation." From his 63-page "black book" report, replete with charts, maps and tables, here are a few recommendations:

- Sharp revision of the Del Valle Regional Park "quiet lake" concept, substituting in its stead a "compromise multiple purpose recreational use plan" that would, in effect, divide the five-mile lake into four "zones" set aside for power boats, water skiing, swimming and sail and row boats.
- One-year experiment for motor boats at Contra Loma and Shadow Cliffs Regional Parks, with a long-range decision to be made thereafter. Outboards of 7½ horsepower are recommended.
- Proposal for a novel, artificially-fed "instant creek" at Del Valle to be created by installing a 900-gallon-per-minute pump at the southern end of the lake. It would boost water upstream about a mile along Arroyo del Valle Creek to insure summer water flow through the camping area. It would also permit year-around stocking of trout.

SUPPORT FOR LEGISLATION TO KILL FREEWAY

Dick Wilson

The bill that State Senator Nejedly plans to introduce early in the legislative session to abolish part of Freeway Corridor 93 is receiving strong support. The Diablo Chapter of the Sierra Club and the Ecology Action Council of Rossmoor took action in December. So did the Park Council Board of Directors at its November meeting. These acts are reaffirmations of the stands taken by a number of organizations and individuals during this year. Those stands by his constituents helped convince the Senator that the freeway to run between Las Trampas Park and Rossmoor, connecting Alamo with the Moraga Valley, was not in the public interest, and should be eliminated from the State Highway Master Plan.

CARROTS AND CCRDC (Central County Residents for Density Control) are other organizations considering action to support Nejedly as counter forces to the recent negative position taken by the County Board of Supervisors against Nejedly's bill.

Other organizations and individuals interested in economy and preservation of our environment from further pollution by smog and noise are encouraged to write both Senator Nejedly and Assemblyman Boatwright, with information copies to Supervisor Moriarty -- the only supervisor protesting the action by the County Board. Obviously any current support Nejedly and Boatwright receive from their constituents will help expedite passage of the anti-freeway legislation.

SIERRA CLUB PLANS OUTINGS

Material copied from the bulletin of the Mt. Diablo Regional Group of the Sierra Club. Molly Reeves (254-1423) is Outings Chairman.

"Up the Delta" or Frank's Tract Work Party: January 20, Saturday ALL DAY. Hosted by SANE* students (elem., jr. high and high school) and their director, Ms. Jane Helrich. An all-day excusion requiring the following: water-proof poncho, wool or down jacket, sturdy boots, a hearty lunch (plan a hot liquid), and a cutting tool, i.e. shears, clippers, etc., for trail clearing. The only way to see the island is to open the trails; onward to the peat bogs! Children 9 and older may be included if they have had sufficient experience and exposure to handle a long day in the out-of-doors. Family groups are encouraged to register. Reservations will be taken. Deadline Monday, January 15; no reservations following that day. Please realize that a reservation is a serious commitment - that you will be coming unless ill. DO NOT make your reservation until you are certain.

*SANE (Save America's Natural Environment) has been working with the State Legislature to maintain the levees against flooding that would destroy the habitat of beaver, muskrat, and numerous water fowl. We owe a lot to these youngsters. Here is your chance to meet them and spend a day in the Delta with their knowledge and spirit! Maps and road directions will be provided. There is a fee for the ferry.

January 27 - Saturday: Round Top Regional Park. Help extend the Skyline Trail and add to the National Recreational Trails System. Meet at the junction of Skyline and Grizzly Peak Blvds. in Oakland at 9:30 a.m. Contact leaders Don deFremery (254-5243) or Chuck Nimmo (283-3042) for rides and riders. Beginners welcome. Bring lunch and liquids. Gloves and long sleeves recommended as some poison oak probable.

Rainbow trout, black bass, catfish, bluegill, crappie, even some hefty striped bass lurk in the lakes of the East Bay Regional Park District. There are plenty of good fishing spots at Alameda Beach, Cull Canyon, Lake Chabot, Temescal, Lake Anza (in Tilden Regional Park), Don Castro, Del Valle, Contra Loma, and Shadow Cliffs. An EBRPD permit--for fisherfolk 16 years old and over--costs only $2.

CANAL TRAIL CLOSE TO REALITY

Use of the Contra Costa Canal right of way as a hiking, bicycle, and horse trail is close to reality. The trail paralleling the canal from Martinez through Pleasant Hill and Walnut Creek to the east side of Concord, a distance of twelve miles, is already in place. All that is now required is fencing from the canal, with proper posting. Mechanized vehicles will not be permitted.

Although objections were raised by some homeowners along the right of way who felt that their privacy will be disturbed, the project has been officially endorsed by the cities of Walnut Creek, Pleasant Hill, and Concord, and by the Contra Costa Water District and the East Bay Regional Park District. $75,000 has been pledged by the participating agencies, and application has been made for a like amount in matching funds from the Secretary of the Interior's Contingency Fund. With the allocation of the matching money the last hurdle will have been cleared and work on this vital link in Contra Costa's emerging trail system can get under way.

BART TRAILS PLANNING STUDY

Trails in Contra Costa are finally coming into their own, after years of talk and study. Recognition of the growing importance of a well-integrated trails system has been recognized by BART, who are showing commendable foresight in appointing a Citizen Study Committee and hiring planning consultants for the technical portion of the study. The firm of Hart-Krivatsky-Stubee has prepared a report detailing their study plan, and is proceeding with the plan proper. They will analyze the use of BART-owned land and determine what feeder trails are needed to connect with the BART trains. Special consideration will be given to connecting links to the Regional Parks, and to commuter bicycle routes. Consideration will also be given to week-end transport of bicycles on BART trains for recreation purposes.

MORGAN TERRITORY ESTATES

The report of the Contra Costa Planning Commission on Morgan Territory Estates rezoning will be presented to the Board of Supervisors on Tuesday, January 23, 1973, at 2:15 p.m. This 832-acre, horse-oriented development would invade the last attractive, unspoiled area in the county, opening the way to its complete urbanization.

The area is zoned agricultural on the county general plan and as permanent open space on the ABAG plan, approved by the Board of Supervisors. If planning is to mean anything in Contra Costa County this project should be firmly denied. The county planning staff has recommended against the development, the county Planning Commission has voted against it, the Mt. Diablo School District Board has voted against it, and conservationists are unanimous in condemning the project. Your displeasure with the Morgan Territory Estates proposal should be expressed by letters to the Board of Supervisors and attendance at the January 23 hearing.

WE GET IT STRAIGHT

Park Council News, December issue, reported the possibility that EBRPD might serve as an interim holding agency for land acquired by Contra Costa County through the operation of the park dedication ordinance. It then stated: "Only Fred Blumberg, president of EBRPD and a resident of Lafayette, opposed such an interim agreement." In fact, Mr. Blumberg has been a strong supporter of the ordinance and is personally willing to offer interim assistance by the Park District. His concern is that in the event of such an arrangement the Park District's liability should be minimized.

QUARRY

January 16, at 2:45 p.m., the Board of Supervisors will hold a hearing on the violation of a land use permit by Kaiser Quarry. Piece-by-piece removal of Mt. Zion, plus noise and hazard in the immediate neighborhood, is unquestionably of interest to conservationists. After Mt. Zion has been removed, could Mt. Diablo itself be next?

SHOOTING AT PT. PINOLE

Literally thousands of shotgun, rifle, and pistol cartridge casings have been found at Pt. Pinole, which will ultimately become an East Bay Regional Park. Larry Olson, Chief of Public Safety, reported that 14 citations have been issued and five shotguns confiscated since Park District rangers began patrolling the 1000-acre park area on November 18. Their work supplements that of Bethlehem Steel Corporation guards and the Richmond Police Department.

Naturalists of the EBRPD serve the increasingly important function of educating citizens and governmental agencies about the environmental values of Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. For further information about EBRPD Naturalist programs telephone 524-1034.

Shell mounds in Coyote Hills Regional Park have yielded shell pendants, bone whistles, arrowheads, and other archaeological evidence of aboriginal activity dating to 4000 years ago. Regular tours of the mounds are led by EBRPD naturalists, and special tours may be arranged. For further information on the Southern Alameda County park, telephone 471-4967.

Most convenient campgrounds in the Bay Area are in the Las Cumbres area of Anthony Chabot Regional Park. There are more than 70 campsites in the EBRPD facility, off Redwood Road between Castro Valley and Oakland. Other campsites are available at Sunol Valley and Del Valle Regional Park. For further information, call EBRPD at 531-9300.

LINSCHEID CALLS NIGHT MEETINGS A WASTE OF TIME

William Smith, the people's advocate, states in his recent bulletin that: "At the conclusion of a long hearing at their November meeting, the crowd in the chambers got up to leave. After they had all filed out, Linscheid proceeded to say how this demonstrated that night meetings were a waste of time. He indicated that yours truly (Smith) was the only citizen in the chamber as they finished up their last routine of business, and that all the other people had come out only to influence the Supervisors on a particular issue..... The citizens have turned out in large numbers to all meetings, even the summer ones, but the Supervisors feel that public participation is not in the best interests of the county -- or maybe their own actions!"

NEW DAM PLAN AIRED

EBMUD has announced plans for construction of a "piggy-back" dam to be built next to an existing dam in the Oakland hills. The existing Upper San Leandro Dam was found to be susceptible to damage in the event of an earthquake equal in magnitude to the 1906 San Francisco quake. The five million dollar project should be complete by October, 1975.

Our heartfelt appreciation to all of you who have responded to our plea for membership renewal. Without memberships, no News! In case the matter slipped your mind, the membership fee should be sent to our treasurer, John Gravell, 1850 Lacassie Avenue, Walnut Creek, CA 94596. See footnote on Page 1.

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February 1973

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BOUQUETS FOR MORIARTY AND LINSCHEID

Supervisors Jim Moriarty and Edmund Linscheid deserve praise from Contra Costa County's bicycle riders. Thanks in large measure to official encouragement by the two supervisors, the county last month transformed years of talk into action by opening 14 miles of bikeway through the San Ramon Valley. The new route consists of striped shoulders down both sides of the old highway from Rudgear Road in Walnut Creek to Alcosta Blvd. in Dublin, with "Bike Only" signs and directional arrows painted on the blacktop. Total cost was about $24,000, which included modification of storm drain covers so that they will not trap bike wheels.

Meanwhile, efforts to make use of the Southern Pacific R.R. right-of-way between Pleasanton and Martinez as a biking and horseback riding trail continue. EBRPD staffers have been collaborating with SP in drawing up engineering specifications for an experimental 7.5-mile segment between Danville and Walnut Creek. In addition, several developers of property near the right-of-way have shown interest in the possibility of contributing to the construction of a trail alongside the tracks.

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FLU STRIKES PARK COUNCIL

Raydean Randlett

Proving once again on Jan. 18 that the Park Council represents the people, at least half of the Board of Directors stayed away with the peoples' flu! However, one special guest participated in the board meeting: Brian Murphy, President of DVC's Ecology Club and a member of Overview.

Neither rain nor hail nor a long day in Sacramento could keep Mary Bowerman from attending this meeting. Mary reported that a permanent source of income had to be found for land acquisition. State and National Park fees now go into the general fund, but could be a natural source of money for land acquisition. Brian Murphy pointed out that the state has neglected our counties by not giving us our fair share of monies available for state parks. It was generally agreed that to plan ahead and purchase lands at reasonable prices, a permanent source must be found. After much discussion of the possible ways to raise funds, Bill Dickinson asked Mike Tripp to help evaluate possibilities by beginning discussions with legislators.

Mary also reported that the wine tasting party and the bicycle raffle to Save Mt. Diablo netted about $3,000. Thanks to all of you who contributed to this great cause.

Al Burton, as President of East Bay Trails Council, moved that we continue our membership in the Trails Council by sending in our ten dollar membership fee. The council passed the motion with the suggestion that Al carry the Park Council's invoice to the Trails Council! It seems we exchange memberships.

Al pointed out that there is a great need for a professional appraiser to volunteer occasionally to appraise land that might be purchased for parks. If anyone knows a conservation-minded appraiser, please get his name to Al Burton. Al also reported that he would continue his follow-through on the Park Dedication Ordinance at a special meeting with Supervisors Moriarty and Dias on January 25. Al's purpose is to retain the bill without allowing it to be weakened.

SUPERVISORS DENY REZONING

Raydean Randlett

By 2:15 on January 23 about one hundred-and-fifty people had gathered to hear the decision of the Board of Supervisors regarding Morgan Territory Estates.

The proponents were represented by Mr. Ronayne of Ronayne Development, who gave the long history of his effort to have 871 acres rezoned from agricultural use to low-density housing and commercial use. Numerous maps were presented showing the exclusive horseman's haven which the developer has planned. He assured the Supervisors that there was a demand for this type of housing with horses in the back yard and a locked gate at the entrance to protect property owners from intruders. He repeatedly assured everyone that sewage, slippage, and water problems could be handled by his experts.

Brian Murphy, speaking frankly, led the long line of opponents who spoke of the non-merits that had been enumerated by the county staff. Brian, one of many students attending the hearing, held his own in the face of Supervisor Lindscheid's inimitable questioning. While Mr. Dias encouraged the students to participate in their local government, Mr. Linscheid made it perfectly clear that they needed to be prepared to defend themselves while doing so.

Contra Costa Park Council is a nonprofit organization incorporated under the laws of the State of California. The Council is dedicated to fostering the natural beauty of the county, preserving open space, and providing opportunity for healthful recreation. Contributions ($2 a year for students; $5 a year and up for individuals; $10 a year and up for organizations) are tax-deductible.

Bill Dickinson, representing the Park Council, spoke succinctly and expertly about the total detrimental effects, the leap-frog development, and the prematurity of developing this rugged area at this time. Bill complimented Ronayne on a "good plan", but stated that Morgan Territory was the wrong place.

Sue Watson represented People for Open Space. She read a carefully prepared statement pointing out future costs and the lack of true consideration of the eco-system.

For nearly two hours listeners heard terms like "Out of character for this rural area", "Attack on last open space area", "Against ABAG plan", "Against General Plan", and "Ecological disaster!" Other speakers represented the Central County for Density Control, Diablo Womens' Club, nearby homeowners, and the League of Women Voters. The hearing was a rewarding one for most of the observers who turned out; in the end, the rezoning was denied unanimously.

SUNOL PARK ON CRITICAL LIST

What kind of wilderness has a large residential development sitting right on top of its watershed? Sunol Wilderness Park is the answer unless environmentalists act immediately. Sunol Park Wilderness Coalition and the Sierra Club filed an appeal with the Alameda County Board of Supervisors, asking that building permits not be issued on the old Abrott Ranch pending the preparation of environmental impact statements.

The county ruled that recently enacted AB899 amended the California Environmental Quality Act and exempted building permits from the requirement of filing impact reports. This paves the way for the issuance of many building permits in the next few weeks. Already seven homesites and private streets, carved into the hills, are visible from within the park.

In the words of the Alameda County Planning Staff, "Residential use of the parcels proposed, along with potential division of other similarly situated lands in the vicinity, would conflict with the present wilderness character of the park, would create demands for public services including utilities improvement of Welch Creek Road, fire and police protection, and would be inconsistent with the agriculture, open space, water generation, and wildlife uses of the area." This subdivision would drive away the golden eagles, prairie falcons, and the Alameda striped racer; it would destroy the character and quality of one of only two wilderness parks in the East Bay, and threatens to pollute the park's watershed through the use of septic tanks.

To help, call SAVE SUNOL PARK WILDERNESS COALITION at 658-7927 or 548-2292 or write to: Marlin W. Haley, Pres., EBRPD, 11500 Skyline Blvd., Oakland, Calif. 94619.

See the map on the back page.

CONSERVATION CAPSULES

• EBRPD has announced that Mrs. Doreta Chaney, who has served as director of the Development Department, will be on loan to the National Recreation and Parks Association for a three-month tour of duty in Washington, D.C. In the slightly more than two years that Mrs. Chaney has been in charge, $81,783 has been received through the medium of the EBRPD-affiliated Inter County Parks Foundation.

• Robert N. Blau was honored by the EBRPD Board of Directors when he was presented with a 15 year service pin. His years of service have taken him from Park District garbageman to acting chief of the Parks Department. Probably one of the few Park District employees who is a published poet, he has a Master's Degree in English.

COUNCIL LAUDS BLUMBERG

Sue Watson

The Park Council Board of Directors passed on January 18 a resolution commending Fred Blumberg on his term as President of the East Bay Regional Park District Board of Directors.

The new officers of the Park District are Marlin Haley, President; Howard Cogswell, Vice-President; Fred Blumberg, Secretary; and Paul Badger, Treasurer. Mr. Haley succeeds Mr. Blumberg, whose two years as President have seen a great growth of the District. Mr. Blumberg was first elected as Director from Ward 7 in 1964 when Contra Costa came into the Regional Park system.

With the passage of AB 925 (Knox) in 1971, granting a ten cent rise in the tax rate, the District has begun a new era. The prestigious planning firm of OVERVIEW, headed by Stewart Udall, has been hired to draw a 20-year Master Plan. A Citizens Task Force has been appointed to work with OVERVIEW and advise the Park Board of Directors.

Also during Blumberg's presidency, Contra Costa saw two great acquisitions of park land occur: Point Pinole and the Coal Mines property. Acquisition of these magnificent lands, in opposite parts of the county, demonstrates foresight, skill, and perserverance of the Board, the General Manager, Dick Trudeau, and his staff.

Planning for Arroyo Del Cerro Recreation Area, in conjunction with a flood control project, was begun under Blumberg's presidency, as well as the cooperative efforts with the county and private landholders for the inception of a future trail system.

The Park Council expresses great thanks to Fred Blumberg for his vigorous and noteworthy leadership of the Park District during a crucial period of its history. We know that he will continue to serve us and the District well as Secretary during the next years.

COLD SNAP DAMAGES PIPES

Directors of EBRPD authorized allocation of up to $10,000 for repair of damage caused by December's freezing weather. The big plunge in temperatures took place over a weekend when no workers were on hand to turn on the water; consequently, the pipes burst.

OREGON FIGHTS THE CAN

As a result of the growing quantity of beer and soft drink cans in the state of Oregon, the voters recently passed a revolutionary bill that seriously promotes the use of returnable containers, which must be certified by the state before being sold in the state. The act also provides for a study of the operation of the act as to (1) the economic impact, (2) distribution, sale and return problems, (3) effectiveness in the reduction of litter by beverage containers, and (4) enforcement costs.

IMPORTANT DATE:

February 15 - Thursday, 8:00 p.m. Park Council board meeting, Water District office, 2700 Concord Ave., Concord. All are welcome.

ALAMEDA CREEK BIKEWAY OPENED

Alvin A. Burton

Fortunately for the future of this planet, not all that comes under the heading of PROGRESS is bad! A most heartening thing is that after years of planning and torrents of talk our trails program is finally coming into its own. Only a few years back, when Stewart Udall was Secretary of the Interior, it would have been hard to believe that on Jan. 13, 1973, he would be here dedicating a new trail, and in his speech lauding the Army Corps of Engineers as forward-looking conservationists.

The new Alameda Creek Trail extends for over 11 miles on either side of the flood control channel passing through Union City, Fremont, and Newark. Another three miles are to be opened later in the year. As with our future Contra Costa Canal trail, the Alameda Creek trail was a cooperative effort between a number of agencies. EBRPD has contributed $123,000 and will administer the trail; the Alameda County Flood Control District put in $77,000; the New Haven Unified School District cooperated; and the Army Corps of Engineers has put up half of the $400,000 cost to-date and has organized the actual work. Finding the Army Engineers planting trees along the trail instead of building highly questionable dams gives us hope for the future.

Demonstrating the current widespread interest in trails, fully twice as many people showed up for the dedication breakfast as had been anticipated. There was a furious egg-scrambling to get all the hungry people fed.

Just about everyone was dressed for the trail, plaid hiking shirts being intermingled with pink silk riding costumes. Speeches by legislators and officials of the various agencies spoke of the vision and cooperation that had made the trail possible. Stewart Udall said that "only a few years ago the idea of the Army Corps of Engineers planting trees as they are doing here on Alameda Creek would have boggled the mind."

The speeches were good, but it was great to get out to the trail itself for the official trail opening. Dr. Howard Cogswell, EBRPD Director, used a cutting torch with professional skill to cut the bicycle chain festooned with horse shoes and old hiking boots. With the cutting of the chain, the trail was officially opened for use and everyone fanned out to explore it.

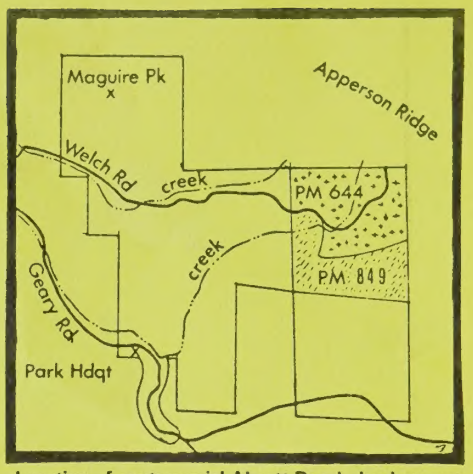
The channel itself is over a hundred feet wide and, frankly, utilitarian. Hikers and bikers use one side, and hikers and horses the other. Anything motorized is barred. We were on bicycles and we found the going delightful. Although the trail is gravel, not perfectly smooth black-top, we rode easily. What a great relief it was to escape the menace and fumes of the automobile! A number of busy highways are encountered, but at these points the trail gracefully swoops through underpasses so there is never a traffic problem.

Although the trail was well signed, there were still a couple of illegal minibikes on it. Some degree of patrolling will undoubtedly be needed. Scenery along the trail is varied and pleasant. Backyards are visible in some places, but when the thousands of newly planted trees grow up the houses will be well screened.

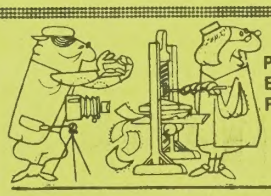
Riders and hikers can enjoy water birds in the channel, gravel quarries and crushing plants, open fields of what looks like kale, and a backdrop of beautiful hills. As a sample of the trail system that is finally materializing, we found the new Alameda Creek trail very much to our liking. We and our heirs can appreciate many people who had a hand in making the project a reality.

"If the earth's history could be compressed into a single year, the first eight months would be completely without life, the next two would see only the most primitive creatures, mammals wouldn't appear until the second week in December, and no Homo Sapiens until 11:45 on December 31. The entire period of man's history would occupy the final 60 seconds before Midnight."

Richard Carrington



Location of controversial Abrott Ranch development proposal near Sunol Valley Regional Park.



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CONTRA COSTA PARK COUNCIL

PARK COUNCIL NEWS

Vol. 73, No. 3

March 1973

Newsletter of the Contra Costa Park Council, P.O. Box 4322, Walnut Creek, CA 94596.
Editor: Patrick Whittle, 176 Waterman Circle, Danville, CA 94526 (Phone 837-3478).
President: William S. Dickinson, Jr., 4261 Brentwood Circle, Concord, CA 94521 (Phone 689-4474).

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Let us know who should be getting the Park Council News! If you have friends who would like to be on our mailing list, call Mary Rogers Smith at 939-4640 and she will see that they receive the newsletter. It's time to update our mailing list and system; so if you enjoy being kept up to date on park matters but haven't paid your annual dues, please slip a check into the mail to: John Gravell, 1850 Lacassie Avenue, Walnut Creek, Calif. 94596.

Dues are $5.00 or more, except for the student rate of $2.00. If we don't hear from our readers, we must assume that they have moved and take their names off our list.

PARK COUNCIL MEETING - FEBRUARY FIFTEEN

With Sue Watson conducting in Bill Dickinson's absence, the Park Council focused on future happenings. Now that Al Burton has officially become a Park Consultant to the County, we expect that all our problems will be smaller. Al's appointment, which came over a stormy route, will come up for approval again on July 1, 1973. Hence, he has his work cut out for him. He has asked that everyone feel free to suggest to him areas which he might investigate.

James Cutler, who handles planning for open space on the County Planning staff, will be asked to attend the next Park Council Meeting which is scheduled for March 15, at 8:00 p.m., in the Contra Costa Water Building.

Manny Lindner reported that the Blackhawk Ranch developer will be holding public meetings to promote that development in Danville. Two thousand units are being planned and Manny suggested that we keep a vigilant watch on what will become of Mt. Diablo's foothills.

On more official business, the council renewed its membership to the "People for Open Space" organization.

WHAT'S NEEDED TO SAVE A WILDERNESS

Sunol Valley Regional Park is currently the subject of much negotiation. At the February 6 meeting of EBRPD, the directors seemed to be split on the question of whether to purchase lands surrounding Sunol Wilderness Park. At issue is the impact of a 13 lot, 266 acre subdivision adjacent to the EBRPD lands and accessible only via the narrow, steep Welch Creek Road, a county road which traverses the park.

Directors authorized staff to enter negotiations for the purchase of 266 acres held by Charles Moore, who has offered to sell his land to the district at the price he paid for it "plus costs". Staff also was directed to enter "intensive negotiations" with the owners of the 13 parcels comprising the area, collectively labeled the Abrott subdivision, and to report back at the board's next meeting, February 20. The owners have already indicated they don't want to sell. Two houses have been completed and a third has a building permit.

More than half of the 30-plus-member task force "Overview" was present in the auditorium in advance of the Board meeting. The group voted approval of six recommendations for EBRPD on lands adjacent to the park. The recommendations include moving immediately to acquire all the area within Abrott subdivision - by condemnation if no agreement can be reached promptly - except those two or three ownerships where houses are under construction or have received a building permit as of February 6, and purchasing the area of the proposed Moore subdivision. EBRPD would then regrade the acquired properties to natural contours and replant them.

"Overview" also urges EBRPD to purchase scenic easements over or development rights to portions of Apperson's Diamond A Ranch and the Wauhab property that lie within the viewshed of Sunol Park, permitting perpetual continuation or ranching in private ownership but preventing building or grading without consent of the Park District. If necessary, EBRPD would acquire the property through other means.

The group recommends allowing the three houses to remain temporarily while assuring their ultimate removal.

In cooperation with the Alameda County and other health authorities, EBRPD would monitor water quality effects of houses built in the area, and if water quality is impaired, see that appropriate legal actions are taken.

Alvin H. Baum, "Overview" Project Director, said of the present construction, "Ideally all houses should be removed from the viewshed. But if that is unfeasible..... "Overview" feels that [illegible] could survive temporary encroachment by as many as three houses ..... but could not survive any additional encroachment."

EBRPD General Manager Richard Trudeau stressed the importance of protecting the park's wilderness aspect. "As a wilderness park, Sunol may be subject to more potential intrusions than other parks .....Unfortunately, not everyone can understand the value of open space and solitude, which a wilderness park offers, just as not everyone

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understands the special experience people get from symphony concerts, museums, churches, or even a basketball game."

The district received cards and letters from more than 325 persons and organizations expressing concern for the integrity of the wilderness park. However, Mrs. Gilbert Barbee, one of the property owners, presented petitions bearing signatures of 536 persons opposing EBRPD condemnation of the Abrott lands.

Acceptance of the whole "Overview" package was urged by Director Dr. Cogswell, of Hayward, who moved its adoption. Mary Jefferds, Berkeley, seconded the motion.

Doubts about the proposal were expressed by Directors Fred C. Blumberg, Lafayette; John J. Leavitt, Alameda; Clyde Woolridge, Oakland; Board President Marlin Haley, Hayward; and Paul J. Badger, Pinole. Cogswell then agreed to an amendment under which the board directed staff only to pursue the "intensive negotiations" and to report back to the board.

While most people reading the Park Council News are probably appalled at the prospect of a subdivision on top of a wilderness park, they should ponder the questions involving how this disaster was allowed to happen. These lands could have and should have been purchased by EBRPD before permanent structures were constructed, but the District had no money for land acquisition at that time.

Until all conservationists demand from our government a permanent source of funding for land acquisition and park development, we will continue to fight the fire with buckets of water. The problem, as always, is money.

INTRODUCING THE PARC

Dick Wilson

About a year ago, we reported the possibility of a federally funded park that might embrace ridges for 70 miles or so, with the Carquinez Strait as the northern anchor and Henry Coe State Park, east of the Santa Clara Valley, as the southern end. Some people still "think big" about that possibility. But, realistically, it is unlikely that such a park can materialize for at least several years. Downstream obstacles include the fact that federal money allocated for parks in our area will be needed for the Golden Gate National Recreation area. Furthermore, it is obvious that there will be severe competition for federal funds to meet priority needs aside from parks in the near future.

The President's budget proposes slashing Land and Water Conservation funds next year to about one sixth of the $300 million budgeted for this fiscal year. These funds have been used with matching local money to purchase parks and open space in areas administered by various levels of government. If the Congress accepts this proposal, the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, which administers such land acquisition, will be able to provide little help in park planning and coordination.

To illustrate the need for coordination in Contra Costa and Alameda Counties, consider the fact that four public agencies administer sizable chunks of parks and open spaces. EBRPD handles a dozen and a half separate parks aggregating about 29,000 acres. EBMUD administers about the same amount of land (mostly in two blocks). San Francisco Water District controls essentially an equal amount, in one block. And there is Mt. Diablo State Park, comprising 7,665 acres. Much of these lands are presently undeveloped for recreational use, and there is no assurance that the current "Overview" study can or will provide a comprehensive plan for the intermingled public and private lands within these two counties. Moreover, the adjacent county of Santa Clara contains some of the best potential for a National Park close to urban centers. This includes Henry Coe State Park southeast of San Jose -- mostly wilderness, with a few picnic tables and a couple of privies where a road terminates at the park edge.

On the favorable side, Congressmen from Contra Costa (Waldie), Alameda (Dellums and Stark), and Santa Clara (Edwards) have indicated support for a ridge park that would prevent appropriation of large open spaces as residential or other developments. Senators Cranston and Tunney concur. At the same time, federal officials have indicated that planning must insure that people who live in the core of our cities have public transport facilities to the parks.

Congressman Stark discussed the proposal at San Leandro Feb. 16 with 35 mayors, councilmen, and county supervisors whose jurisdictions overlay the 8th Congressional District. He suggested that the veterans memorial cemetery proposed for Camp Parks could be placed in the ridgetop park and that flat land at the federally owned camp could be traded for privately owned hilltop.

Stark also revealed that members of a family in the area have offered to make a sizable donation toward creation of the park.

Santa Clara County has an active park and recreation commission to help in planning. Not so, of course, in Alameda or in Contra Costa. This lack is dramatized in Contra Costa County by the large amount of money earmarked for parks that is piling up in a bank, after being collected from developers under the park dedication ordinance. In Alameda County a small but active organization has been formed and has begun planning. Calling itself PARC (Preserve Area Ridgeland Committee), it meets the first Tuesday of each month, 8-10 p.m., in Room F-12, Amador High School, 1155 Santa Rita Road, Pleasanton. It invites participation from groups and individuals in all three counties. Voting memberships (including newsletter) are $5. For newsletter only, send $1. Contact: Margaret Tracy, Chairman, PARC, 1262 Madison Avenue, Livermore, Ca. 94550. Phone 447-0115. The Contra Costa Park Council maintains liaison with PARC through Dick Wilson, 933-0459. Information is also available from Mary Rogers Smith, Chairman, Las Trampas Committee. (939-4640)

PARC, aside from contacting and arranging meetings with public officials, is assembling pertinent maps and data on ownership of open, private lands along the ridgelands that might join isolated blocks of public lands.

NEWS FLASH ON SUNOL PARK...

EBRPD directors made their fateful decision on the future of Sunol Valley Regional Park Feb. 20. The park is, after all, not a "wilderness park," they decided by a 4 to 3 vote, and there's no good reason to stop people from building homes around its borders. While dropping plans to acquire subdivision lands adjacent to the park, they instructed staff to enter discussions with the San Francisco Water District, seeking lands to create a corridor linking up other wilderness areas with the 3,213-acre park.

The vote was on a motion to acquire, either by negotiation or condemnation, the majority of lots in the 260-acre Abrott subdivision. It was offered by Dr. Howard L. Cogswell, Hayward, and seconded by Miss Mary Jefferds, Berkeley. D. Cogswell, Miss Jefferds, and President Marlin W. Haley, Hayward, voted for the motion. Fred C. Blumberg, Lafayette, Paul J. Badger, Pinole, John J. Leavitt, Alameda, and Clyde R. Woolridge, Oakland, voted against.

Blumberg and Woolridge cautioned against over-extending the Park District financially in the Sunol matter. Badger sounded a similar note but held out the hope that perhaps new wilderness areas could be acquired in the direction of Camp Ohlone.

Haley and Miss Jefferds, on the other hand, cited the recommendation of the 83-member Citizens' Task Force to acquire the subdivision lands.

The matter of the proposed 266-acre Moore subdivision, which is adjacent both to the park and the Abrott lots, was touched on, but no further action could be taken because Moore's attorney was reported out of town for several weeks.

What does not appear to have been brought up in the lengthy discussions is that the entire area has been designated as permanent open space in the ABAG Regional Plan, which Alameda County has officially adopted. One can't help wondering why subdivisions were allowed there in the first place. Does it mean that the plan isn't worth the paper it's printed on?

SUFFOCATING SUNOL

As if Sunol Regional Park didn't have enough threats to its state of wilderness, William W. Apperson is proposing the establishment of a "dude ranch" health spa, served by a "sulphur spring" and other recreational appurtenances such as 322 guest cottages, "guest villas", a restaurant, clubhouse facilities and tennis courts, fire house, sewage treatment plant, and corporation yard.

Apparently, the proposed "dude ranch" with its 145 acres of developed area, would lie largely north of the ridge. However, the proposed access road would pass within a few hundred feet of the wilderness park boundary.

Park District directors have instructed their staff to oppose plans for the road--which would be visible from the McGuire Peaks area for some 6,000 feet--and a heliport. Richard C. Trudeau, EBRPD General Manager, has observed that Apperson has "done a good job in screening his planned new development." However, concern has been expressed about the effects of helicopter noise on the environment.

LIBRARY ASKS HELP

Friends of the San Ramon Valley Library have asked concerned Park Council members to donate used books (paperback or hardbound) for a fund-raising sale. Used books may be left at the library at 555 S. Hartz Ave., Danville, or pickup can be arranged by calling 837-1617. The sale will be Saturday, May 5, 9-4 at the Sunset Nursery, 856 Danville Blvd., Danville.

SEVENTY TWO - THE YEAR OF THE PARK

In the past year 3889 acres were acquired by EBRPD, bringing the holdings to 29,474 acres. The Regional Parks and Recreation Areas had a record use factor of an estimated 7,500,000 "user days", with water-oriented facilities attracting the biggest crowds.

General Manager Richard Trudeau, in his 12-page annual report, listed major accomplishments for 1972. Among them:

1) Acquisition of the Coal Mines Area Regional Park.

2) Acquisition of Pt. Pinole with three and one half miles of San Pablo Bay Shoreline.

3) Appointment of the 83 member Citizens' Task Force to work in concert with "Overview".

4) Receipt of more than $700,000 in grant funds, as well as qualifying for an additional $1,700,000 yet to be received.

Also itemized were the many improvements undertaken in the following parks: Alameda Memorial State and Regional Beaches, Alameda Creek Trail, Anthony Chabot Regional Park, Coal Mines Area Regional Park, Del Valle Regional Park, Huckleberry Trail, Pt. Pinole Recreation Area, Tilden Regional Park.

We have a park system to be proud of; let's keep it up!

EAST BAY MUNICIPAL UTILITY DISTRICT TO GROW

EBMUD's directors have unanimously agreed to expand its Board of Directors from five to seven people. Senator John Nejedly of Contra Costa County has agreed to introduce a bill to accomplish this. Although each board member must live in a specifically designated ward, the board members will run at large.

The reason for enlarging the board is the increased responsibility which members have regarding such important issues as water pollution control, recreation programs, solid waste disposal.

The Nejedly bill is expected to contain an urgency clause, which means it would become law immediately upon the Governor's signature. The bill would become law by May or June, with the new directors taking their seats within 30 to 90 days thereafter.

NOVEL PARK PROGRAM

What agency teaches state highway and bridge engineers about ecology and the fragile environment, provides "hide and seek nature camouflage games for children", and even participates in joint nest-watching projects to protect fledgling prairie falcons from sly, cunning nest robbers?

That would be the two-county EBRPD's Interpretive Department headed by Christian Nelson. These new activities along with the more routine educational and other programs for park users are summarized in Nelson's annual report, which covered an 18-month period.

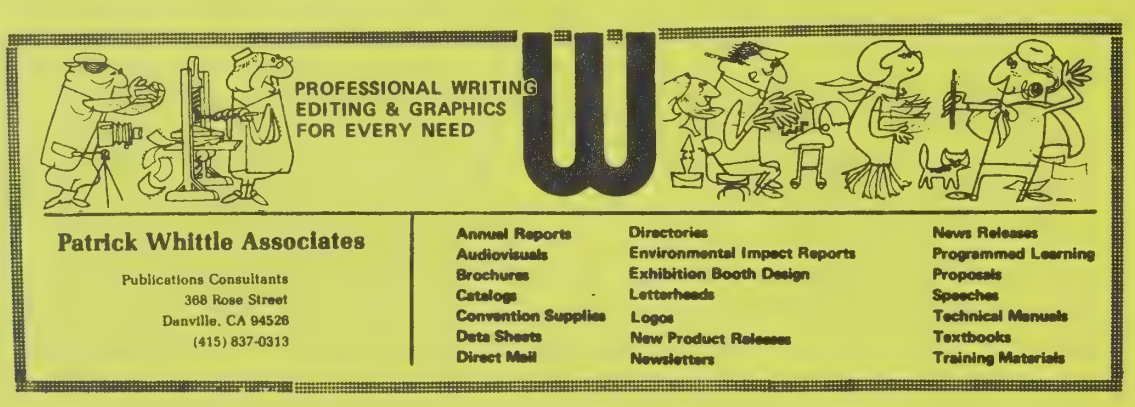
Activities supervised by the Interpretive Department staff of 21 include nature walks, lectures and demonstrations, guided tours, puppet shows, campfire programs, "star parties" (astronomy), panel talks, conservation projects, merit badge counseling, interpretive boat tours, overnight and day camps, and leadership and teacher training. The bulk of the activity occurs in Tilden, Sunol, Coyote Hills and Del Valle Regional Parks and Alameda Memorial State and Regional Beaches.

FAIR SHARE FOR SOUTHERN ALAMEDA COUNTY

Three EBRPD Directors will meet with representatives of the Hayward City Council and the Hayward Area Recreation District to discuss dissatisfaction on the part of some that EBRPD is not buying and developing enough Southern Alameda county parks. At that time, the Board set March 14 at 7:30 p.m. as the day and time for a public meeting to be held in the Hayward City Council chambers seeking suggestions and ideas from the public as to what elements should be incorporated in the future Garin-Meyers Pioneer Regional Park. General Manager Richard Trudeau pointed out that staff has recommended the expenditure of $410,000 in two Southern Alameda County parks -- Garin and Coyote Hills.

TROUT PLANTING MONTH

Fishermen should be happy to hear that 22,800 trout will be planted soon by EBRPD, but the District is not saying where or when. Limits of trout are now being caught at Del Valle Regional Park and Shadow Cliffs.



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"SAVE OUR FARMLANDS" IS THEME OF MARCH MEETING

"Another five years going on like this, and we can kiss it off," was Joe Barnwell's summing up of the future for agriculture in the East County. Barnwell was addressing the Park Council board meeting on March 22 about the planning staff's recommendation that the minimum parcel size with A2 zoning should be increased from 1 to 10 acres.

In his role as county zoning administrator, Barnwell sees the constant fragmentation of agricultural land when property owners request, and get Board of Supervisors approval of, lot splitting.

The two irrigation districts in the East County - East Contra Costa and Byron-Bethany - comprise prime agricultural land, "probably the finest in the State of California". Yet a combination of land speculation, high tax assessments, profit-taking, the blandishments of real-estate salesmen, and pressures from developers threatens to destroy the economic feasibility of farming within a few years.

Land in the East County costs at least $3,000 an acre, which is twice as much as the maximum practical figure for profitable farming.

The general plan for the area, drawn up in 1963, is poor, according to Barnwell. Not enough thought went into its preparation. A new plan will take at least a year to formulate. Irreperable harm can occur during that period unless the Supervisors adopt a policy of deferring major changes in land use until the plan is complete. There is no assurance that the new plan will recommend preserving agricultural use of the farmland. Perhaps, said Barnwell, the planners will decide that residential and commercial development is best for the area. After all, this flat, well-drained terrain is ideal for building.

The federal government is spending millions elsewhere to help farmers make a go of it with marginal land, he added, while this county seems willing to let rich, highly productive soil be paved over. Similar lack of apparent logic is seen in the California Water Plan, which pipes water at great expense to irrigate poor land in the South.

Susan Watson remarked at this point that the productive life of irrigated desert, such as the Imperial Valley, is limited. "It poisons itself to death," she stated.

What is to be done about the problem of the East County? Barnwell and others had several suggestions. Let the Board of Supervisors know that you want agriculture to remain the highest and best use of the land there. Urge the Board to raise the minimum size of an A2 parcel from 1 acre to 10 acres. Do what has been done in Europe to reverse the fragmentation that occurred when land was divided among the sons upon the death of the farmer. Governments in Europe buy the pieces of land and lump them together until they form a feasible size; then they lease the land for farming.

Why not try the purchase-and-lease-back system here? The People for Open Space study, "Economic Impact of a Regional Open Space Program," concluded in 1969 that the costs of buying all the permanent open space in the ABAG Regional Plan would be "much lower than is popularly supposed, and the rewards for the future would be great indeed."

The POS study, made by Development Research Associates and Livingston & Blayney, found that to buy almost 2,000,000 acres would cost the public about $2 billion at the 1969 prices. As a comparison $1 billion was spent in the previous 10 years in the Bay Area on state highway construction and the cost of BART will rise to well over another $1 billion.

Taking into account all the savings, the net cost might be as little as $2-$3 per person each year. These savings would include revenue from lease-back to farmers, as well as greatly reduced expenditures on water, sewers, and other urban services through "limitation of sprawl and compaction of urban development".

"Looking back from the year 2000," the report added, "a purchase at this price in 1969 would appear comparable to the 1626 purchase of Manhattan Island for $24."

Concluding the Park Council meeting, members voted to "explore the possibility of calling a conference to seek a rapprochment between conservationists, farmers of the East County, and county planners in the matter of land use." The conference would be held in collaboration with the Sierra Club and People for Open Space.

Members also approved a policy statement that the Council recommends use of such public funds as revenue sharing and surplus state taxes for the purchase of lands to be added to Mt. Diablo State Park.

A nomination committee was established to select a slate of officers and directors for the Council. The committee comprises these members: Joann Johnson, Bill Dickinson, Susan Watson, Katie Haubensak, and Carl Webber.

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Contra Costa Park Council is a nonprofit organization incorporated under the laws of the State of California. The Council is dedicated to fostering the natural beauty of the county, preserving open space, and providing opportunity for healthful recreation. Contributions ($2 a year for students; $5 a year and up for individuals; $10 a year and up for organizations) are tax-deductible.

EVERYTHING YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT OVERVIEW

PROPOSED PARK SITES

In a 45 page first phase report Overview recommends the acquisition of two delta islands, three Southern Alameda County mountain peaks above 2500 feet, five possible alternate "mechanical park" sites and a majestic 13,400 acre Regional Wilderness with common boundaries with Del Valle and Sunol Valley Regional Parks.

Now that the preliminary report has been made, public hearings will be held. Task Force members were requested to evaluate all the sites by March 31, to determine which should be considered further and which should be dropped, and to offer any changes in evaluations. Then Overview will prepare its final printed report due in June. EBRPD Directors will, in all probability, adopt the final master plan about a year from now to qualify the Park District for the final five-cent tax increase.

The 39 potential "sites qualifying for acquisition" and estimated minimum and preferred acreages include:

Alameda Creek Quarries, 100 and 800 acres; "Ardenwood", the old Patterson Mansion and environs, 100 and 200; a two-mile strip of narrow shoreline west of the Eastshore Freeway and extending from Berkeley's University Avenue south to Watergate in Emeryville, 500 acres; a 70-acre shoreline site west of the Eastshore Freeway and north of University Avenue; expansion of the Coal Mines Regional Park south of Pittsburg, 600 and 4700; expansion of Briones Regional Park 300 and 1400; enlargement of the Brooks Island shoreline edge, 200 acres; and Browns and Winter Islands near Antioch and Pittsburg, 600 and 1300.

Further expansion would include Anthony Chabot Regional Park, 100 acres; Claremont Canyon Regional Preserve north and south of Claremont Avenue and east of the Claremont Hotel, 500 acres; Coastal Range Peaks including Mission and Monument Peaks and Mt. Allison, 1500 to 2200; expansion of Coyote Hills, 600 and 1400 and Del Valle Regional Park, 6500 acres; Emeryville Crescent Regional Preserve west of the Eastshore Freeway and north of the Bay Bridge approach, 500 acres; expansion of the Garin-Dry Creek Pioneer Park complex, 300 to 2600; Hoffman Marsh adjacent to Hoffman Boulevard and Pt. Isabel, 40 acres; and Huckleberry Preserve on Oakland's eastern boundary between Robert Sibley and Redwood Regional Parks, 100 to 700 acres.

Added to these are Las Trampas, 1800 to 3000, and George Miller Jr. Memorial Regional Park, 300 acres; Morgan Territory, 10 miles southeast of Clayton, 2100 to 3900; Mountain Village site one mile east of the junction of Warren and MacArthur Freeways in Oakland, 700 acres; Old Alameda Creek Shoreline Marsh on the Hayward shoreline south of the San Mateo-Hayward bridge, 400 acres; Pinole Valley, two miles north of Briones Reservoir and adjacent to Briones Regional Park, 1400 to 1900; expansion of Pt. Pinole, 90 acres and Redwood Regional Park, 200 acres; Rowell Ranch on Highway 580 between Castro Valley and Dublin, 400 acres; and San Leandro Bay, 100 acres.

TRAILS

Can you imagine rolling all necessities into a sleeping bag, strapping it onto your bike, and taking off for a week's vacation right here in our own valley? If the recommendations of Overview become a reality, we will have trails linking Regional Parks to BART stations, colleges, shopping areas and other "trailheads". The idea of making a sweeping crescent of open space from Sunol Park to the Del Valle Park will appeal to conservationists of every calling.

Overview envisions a great trail system with six "loop connectors" of varicus lengths making it possible for a rider to start and end at the same point without backtracking. These loops would include: Lake Chabot to Las Trampas Regional Park, Las Trampas to Briones Regional Park, Pleasanton Ridge to Pleasanton via Tehan Falls, Tilden Regional Park to Briones, Sunol Valley Regional Park to Del Valle Regional Park, and San Ramon Valley to Mt. Diablo.

The trails would be for hikers, bicyclists, and horsemen though trails for horsemen would be separated from hikers and bicyclists. No motored vehicles will be allowed on trails. Separate parks are recommended for motorcycles.

The north-south spokes of the BICYCLE-HIKING trail network would include: the Bay shoreline from Fremont to Richmond, the Berkeley-Oakland hills ridgeline, the San Ramon Valley, and a portion of the proposed state bicycle route which will extend from Sacramento to Los Angeles via Antioch, Bethany Reservoir and San Luis Reservoir.

The east-west connectors would include: the Bay shoreline from Richmond to Martinez, the stretch along the waterfront road and the Contra Costa Canal to Antioch, the old Sacramento Northern Railroad grade from Oakland through the tunnel to Walnut Creek, the Alameda Creek flood control channel through Niles Canyon to Livermore and over the Livermore trail system to Altamont Pass Road and a connection with the state trail, and the grade along Interstate 580 from Castro Valley to Dublin.

The EQUESTRIAN-HIKER trail system should include two major north-south routes and four major east-west connectors.

The north-south spokes should include the National Riding and Hiking Trail, with connections running from San Pablo south along the ridges through Hayward, on to Pleasanton Ridge and through Alameda Creek Canyon to Sunol Valley Regional Park. The other spoke would consist of Contra Costa Canal links and the San Ramon Valley from Port Chicago to Del Valle Regional Park.

The east-west connectors would be these: Pinole Creek, Contra Costa Canal and Black Diamond Way between Pinole and Antioch, the linkup between the Redwood/Las Trampas Regional Parks and Danville using the old Utah Construction and Engineering Company easement near Moraga, San Leandro Creek between the Bay shoreline and Lake Chabot, and the Alameda Creek flood control channel between the Bay shoreline and Sunol Valley Regional Park.

Overview encourages trail users to form volunteer groups to assist in patrolling and maintaining the trails. Regular EBRPD patrols should be furnished also to make certain there is no illegal use of the trails.

EBRPD has already made a start on bicycle-hiking and/or horseback-hiking trails along Alameda Creek, on Stanley Blvd. between Pleasanton and Livermore, across the dam and along the south shoreline of Lake Chabot, beside the Wildcat Creek Flood control channel, and along the National Hiking Trail from Wildcat Canyon to Chabot Regional Park. Further plans are in the works for the Contra Costa Canal from Diablo Valley College to Willow Pass Road, the California Riding and Hiking Trail, the S.P. right-of-way from Rudgear Road to Danville, the old Utah easement, and the Sacramento Northern right-of-way from Reliez Station Road to St. Mary's College.

CRITERIA

In order to evaluate potential parkland sites, Overview evolved an elaborate "criteria weighting" formula. The criteria are: need/demand, accessibility, threat of loss, and ease of acquisition. The categories of parklands to which they would be applied are: recreation areas, wildernesses, preserves, parks and vehicular recreation areas. Three weights were used to accommodate criteria differences: above average importance, average importance, and below average importance.

MONEY

Before we get overly enthusiastic about Overview's report let us face the reality that there is a limit to the abount of money available to the East Bay Regional Park District. Though most of us would agree that all 39 proposed new park sites would make a great addition to the Park District system, choices will have to be made. A few facts from the 14 page paper on "Financial Factors":

The estimated total bill for all 39 sites would range from $22,145,000 to $40,244,000. Alvin H. Baum, Jr., cautioned that such figures are not always reliable and costs often exceed them, especially where a public agency is the buyer.

High priority sites total some 27,000 acres; about 20,000 acres represent proposed wilderness acquisitions at relatively lower costs.

Joseph P. Bort, Chairman of both the Alameda County Board of Supervisors and the Task Force, reiterated his stance that the EBRPD tax rate, now at 15 cents per $100 of assessed valuation, should be raised to 50 sents.

Potential sources of additional funds, Overview pointed out, would be tax anticipation borrowing not to exceed a 10 year term, a possible bond issue requiring a two-thirds vote of the electorate as a means of shifting the burden of expenditures partially from one generation of taxpayers to another generation, or a tax increase.

Assuming the bonds were repayable over a 20 year period and carried a 5 1/2 % interest rate, a $25,000,000 issue would have an annual debt service of $2,092,000 with a maximum tax rate of four cents per $100 of assessed valuation in 1973-74 falling to 2.8 cents in 1982-83.

Currently, EBRPD is operating on a 15 cents per $100 of assessed valuation tax which moves to 20 cents by July, 1974, providing the master plan has been approved. Ten cents of the sum is so-called "old money" ante-dating the phased 10 cent increase approved by the legislature. The 10 cent "new money" tax must be expended on a 80-20 formula, with 80 percent being for new land acquisition.

Under terms of recent legislation, no public agency may increase its tax rate directly or through the legislature without a majority vote of the people whereas a bond election requires a 2/3 vote. However, Overview implied that the likelihood of securing passage of a straight tax increase was smaller than the prospects for approval of a park acquisition bond issue.

PARK DEDICATION AMENDMENTS

With Supervisor Moriarty in attendance, the original advisory group on the Park Dedication Ordinance held meetings in January and February of this year to hopefully resolve conflicts of opinion on amendments to the Ordinance.

Highlights of the discussions follow:

1) On recommendation of Supervisor Moriarty, the Board passed a resolution requiring a flat $300 park dedication fee on all detached single family homes submitted on development plans before October 31, 1971, for which a building permit has not yet been issued.

2) County Counsel announced that the ordinance, as presently written, does not permit credit for recreation facilities. Only land may be credited.

3) Developers supported 300 sq. ft. for multiple developments (six or more units per acre) and 500 sq. ft. for single family developments. (Sec. 8.602 Standards for Dedication Area.) Park enthusiasts supported 500 sq. ft. or more per residence for all developments. No resolution was reached.

4) All agreed that $100 as a minimum fee was inadequate, but the group was unable to decided just what the fee should be. (Sec. 8.604 Amount of Fee.)

5) Credit for up to 50% of installation costs of "outdoor recreation facilities" was debated but not resolved. (Sec. 8.802 Credit for Private Space.)

6) County Counsel advised that the ordinance does not limit the location of park and recreation facilities to the development for which the land or fee was dedicated. This would allow funds to be used for regional or city parks if it is deemed desirable. Further, a number of agencies (School districts, EBRPD, etc.) could administer the funds if authorized by the Board of Supervisors. (Sec. 8.1002 Limitations, Use.)

7) No agreement was reached on when the fee value should be established and paid, but probably the Board might decide that the fee should be based on raw land value at the time the development plan is approved, but paid at the time a building permit is issued. In many cases, then, the fee will buy only a fraction of the land that could have been purchased earlier. (Sec. 8.1206 Prerequisite for Approval of Final Subdivision Maps or Building Permit.)

8) The period after which refunds may be requested (on a single family structure on a single parcel lot) was increased from 3 to 5 years.

Mr. Moriarty planned to discuss the changes with Mr. Dias before submitting them to the full Board for action.

MORE TRAILS

Horsemen and hiking fans will have about 60 more miles of scenic solitude to travel when the East Bay Municipal Utility District opens its proposed trail system this spring.

The trails will cross the watershed areas around all five terminal reservoirs - Chabot, at the south end of the EBMUD acreage near Castro Valley; Upper San Leandro, along Redwood Road; Lafayette, off Mt. Diablo Boulevard; San Pablo, north of Orinda; and Briones, off Bear Creek Road.

The southern trail segment will connect Castro Valley with the spectacular Rocky Ridge Trail through Upper San Leandro Reservoir's watershed, then swing westward to the Canyon area, and into Redwood Park.

Trails at the northern end of EBMUD watersheds will run from Briones Park to the new San Pablo Reservoir Recreation Area - also opening this spring - and Tilden Park. A spur trail will extend into the Pinole Valley area.

To meet the watershed protection requirements of the District's Land Use Master Plan, a simple permit system will be instituted. The permit system has been endorsed by the hiking and riding organizations.

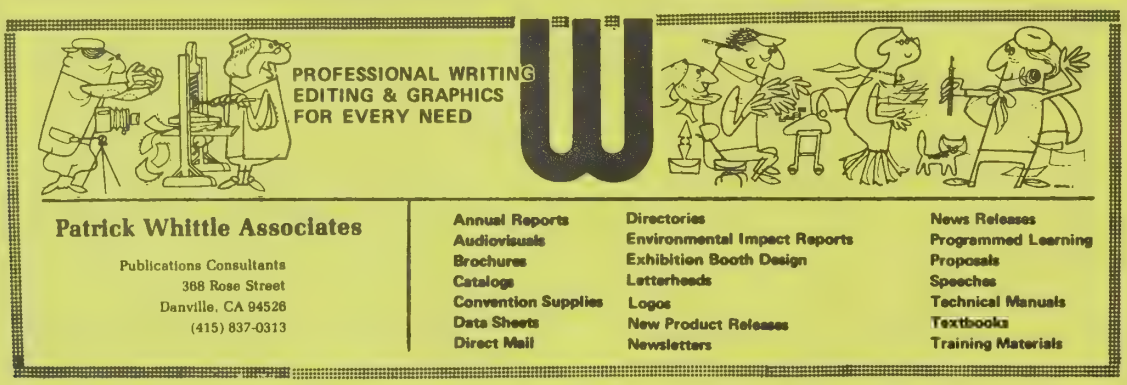
Users must remember that the first priority on watershed land is to protect the water supply, and that strict adherence to rules to be adopted by the Board will be required of anyone using the EBMUD trail system.

AMERICAN RIVER WATER PROJECT TO BE STUDIED

A 34-member citizens committee has been appointed to study the environmental impact of EBMUD's American River project. The panel is reviewing a preliminary report developed by EBMUD consultants. The final report, required by state law, will assess the effects on the environment of bringing water from the river, near Sacramento, to the East Bay.

The utility district expects to need the water by the mid-1980s to supplement its existing supplies. Water would be provided by the federal government's Auburn-Folsom South Project and sold to EBMUD under an existing contract.

Chairman of the committee is Warren J. Kaufman, El Cerrito, an educator-engineer at U.C. Park Council V-P Al Burton is a member.



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PARK COUNCIL NEWS

Vol. 73, No. 5 May 1973

Newsletter of the Contra Costa Park Council, P.O. Box 4322, Walnut Creek, CA 94596.
Editor: Patrick Whittle, 176 Waterman Circle, Danville, CA 94526 (Phone 837-3478).
President: William S. Dickinson, Jr., 4261 Brentwood Circle, Concord, CA 94521 (Phone 689-4474).

SIERRA CLUB'S WAYBURN TO SPEAK AT PARK COUNCIL ANNUAL DINNER JUNE 1

THE SPEAKER

Dr. Edgar Wayburn, a Director on the National Board of the Sierra Club, will be the guest speaker at the Contra Costa Park Council annual dinner on June 1. His subject will be the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Dr. Wayburn has been the key figure in establishing this newest and largest of Bay Area Parks. His presentation should thus be highly authoritative and of great interest to everyone in the Bay Area.

Nationally known, Dr. Wayburn has served many terms as president, vice president, and director of the Sierra Club and is currently president of the Sierra Club Foundation. He was the leading Club spokesman in the struggle for the establishment of Redwood National Park.

THE ANNUAL DINNER

Place: Michael Anthony's Restaurant
2040 Mt. Diablo Street, Concord
Date: Friday, June 1, 1973
Time: 6:30 p.m. for no-host cocktails
7:30 p.m. for dinner
Menu: Choice of Beef Kabob on Skewer or Breast of Chicken Kiev. Dinner includes soup, salad, bread, butter, potato of choice, coffee, & dessert.

WHERE TO SEND RESERVATIONS

Price of the dinner is $6 per person. Reservations must be made in advance: checks, preferably in advance, should be made out to the Contra Costa Park Council. Indicate your choice of entree by a B (beef) or C (chicken) on your notice of reservation or on your check. Send to:

Mr. John Gravell
1850 La Cassie Ave., Apt. 7
Walnut Creek, CA 94596

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

HOW TO GET THERE

To reach the restaurant from either 680 or highway 24, drive east on Willow Pass Road, into the center of old Concord, to Mt. Diablo Street. There is a small park on the left. Turn left on Mt. Diablo and go about two blocks. Anthony's is on the right side of the street.

See you on June 1!

NEXT BOARD MEETING MAY SEVENTEEN

Please note that the Park Council will hold its regular monthly meeting on Thursday, May 17 at 8 p.m. in the Contra Costa Water Building, 2700 Concord Ave., Concord. Business will include final preparation of plans for the annual meeting on June 1, completion of the nominations for the coming year, further discussion on the proposed county general plan, revenue-sharing funds for Mt. Diablo, and report on "overview" recommendations for the EBRPD master plan.

APRIL MEETING

Raydean Randlett

The April Park Council Meeting was devoted largely to Jim Cutler, senior planner for Contra Costa County, who presented the new general plan.

Business transacted before Jim's presentation, in brief: The possibility of a real-estate transfer tax was discussed as a source of revenue for parkland acquistion. Such a tax, at 1% of all sales, with a $30,000 deduction for owner-occupied homes, would greatly increase the current transfer tax without hurting the poor, and would provide some badly needed funds.

Sue Watson announced that People for Open Space will discuss two new important bills (AB920 and AB921) at their May 8th dinner meeting to be held at the U. C. Faculty Club. AB920 would implement county general plans, while AB921 would have the power of condemnation for regional parks. The council reiterated its stance in favor of a permanent source of income for land acquisition, but could not support John Dunlap's bill until it reaches its final form.

May 15 at 1:30 p.m. will be the date of a hearing on revenue sharing funds as a possible source of income for parks.

Lenny Lindner presented a petition on behalf of Bill Schiff. The Park Council Board of Directors voted to support the concept of night hearings in the county, but could not back the petition as it now stands.

Jim Cutler began his presentation by stressing the importance of getting the general plan adopted. The state mandates that a plan be adopted within six weeks.

The map before the council showed that the open space lines tended to follow ridgelines and lands already designated as open space. The important

Contra Costa Park Council is a nonprofit organization incorporated under the laws of the State of California. The Council is dedicated to fostering the natural beauty of the county, preserving open space, and providing opportunity for healthful recreation. Contributions ($2 a year for students; $5 a year and up for individuals; $10 a year and up for organizations) are tax-deductible.

thing about the plan, Jim explained, is the policy of limiting growth to those areas already committed to urban development. The idea of a plan for 1980 means that we would simply defer development in the areas designated as open space. As we all know, that does not mean those areas will never be developed.

The plan has stirred up a lot of controversy because those who own land in the proposed open space do not want to have their selling power deferred.

Lest one think that the plan is designed to stop growth, consider that 100,000 people will move into our county in the next 10 years. The general plan recommends that those people live in areas where sewers, road access, and water are available.

Much subtle and not so subtle pressure will be applied to alter the general plan. The public must make itself heard at all hearings if it is to be adopted.

STATE GOVERNORS UNANIMOUS RE OPEN SPACE

The crying need for sensible land use, as expressed in the new Contra Costa plan, finds support at the highest state levels. Sunset Magazine's 75th Anniversary Issue (May 1973) contains interviews with "two dozen distinguished Westerners all involved with change, all involved with tomorrow." Among the celebrities are the governors of the nine Western states. Every governor expresses concern for environmental protection and emphasizes the need for preserving open space.

Ronald Reagan, Governor of California: "Some developers are now building with the idea of creating a country atomsphere--what California had when there was more space and fewer people. What inducements can we offer a subdivider, for example, to build around just a portion of the land and leave the rest as open space? If he is willing to declare it open space, local government should tax him only on what it is being used for, not what it could be used for."

Calvin Rampton, Governor of Utah: "The great need for land planning...is more in the rural areas where unrestricted subdivision development, much of it speculative, is eating up our agricultural land."

Daniel Evans, Governor of Washington: "We look back east and see all the problems of growth, and that's not what we want. We're still young and yeasty enough to save what we've got."

William Egan, Governor of Alaska: "...we have a chance to plan development properly and wisely, with great concern for the environment."

Cecil Andrus, Governor of Idaho: "Other states used to call us the country cousin--20 years behind. But now that's our advantage. It's like being 20 years ahead."

Jack Williams, Governor of Arizona: "If we can get the proper laws on land planning and restrictions, we are in a position to make really tough standards for the people to come."

Tom McCall, Governor of Oregon: "Ahead we're facing one of our most important battles--land use planning and zoning. People with buffalo-hunter mentality are all around. You leave one little aperture open and they gallop through it like it was the Oklahoma land rush."

John A. Burns, Governor of Hawaii: "We have been willing to try innovative things--like our land use law. Now the Federal Government uses it as a model."

Mike O'Callaghan, Governor of Nevada: "Nevadans have come to realize that probably one of the greatest things we have is wide open space."

CHRIS NELSON LAUDED

O. Christian Nelson, for the past 11 years Chief of EBRPD's Interpretive Department, has been given the coveted "fellow award" of the nationwide Association of Interpretive Naturalists. He makes his home in the park residence in Briones Regional Park and has a Martinez mailing address.

He also was the recipient of a citation from Secretary of the Interior Rogers C. B. Morton "for efforts in the establishment of the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge."

"Chris Nelson is truly one of the leaders of the Association, "President Harold E. Wallin wrote "and he has given valuable service as a member of the Board of Directors and numerous helpful suggestions. Few members have given as much practical guidance in the administration of interpretive programs..."

Nelson obtained his Bachelor of Science degree from Michigan State University and his Master's at Oregon State University, where he graduated cum laude.

"THE ENERGY CRISIS - IS IT REAL? WHAT IF IT IS?"

An in-depth, illustrated discussion of this timely topic will be conducted by Dr. Barney Rubin, Senior Scientist of the Lawrence Livermore Laboratory, Thursday, May 10, 8 p.m., in the Gateway Clubhouse, Rossmoor.

Dr. Rubin is presently serving as Senior Assistant to the Associate Director for the Plowshare Program (to develop peaceful uses of nuclear energy). He also represents Dr. Edward Teller in the Gas Technology Group of the National Gas Survey (part of a Federal Power Commission's program to get a total picture of all energy resources in the United States.)

For this program, Dr. Rubin says: "I want to discuss the conflicts which have arisen between our desires for very high use of energy - at low cost - in a clean environment. The very structure of our society is built upon the massive use of cheap energy." He adds: "now that energy shortages are occurring, pollution has become a problem, and prices are increasing, we must reexamine some of these conflicting desires. New technologies will be able to alleviate energy shortages after ten years or so, but we are facing a difficult period in the near future. Dr. Rubin warns that "solutions to the energy crisis will have to address prices, conservation, tax incentives, foreign trade, oil import policy, environmental controls, and, overall, the desires of the American consumer. Obviously, there are no simple answers."

This is the fourth QUALITY OF LIFE Symposium sponsored by the Ecology Action Council of Rossmoor. There is no admission charge, but those outside Rossmoor will need entrance passes as guests of the council. For passes, call Otto Rhoades, President (939-2712), or Mary Rogers Smith, Vice President (939-4640).

THE EAST COUNTY FARCE

Brian S. Murphy

The citizens of Contra Costa County elected Jerome R. Waldie to represent them in the U.S. Congress, John A. Nejedly in the California State Senate, and Dan Boatwright in the California State Assembly.

In recent conversations with the staffs of our legislators regarding the "farmers' problems" in the East County, I received the same response: "No, we haven't received any mail from farmers in the East County asking for help." This indicates that perhaps there are very few farmers in the East County, and the others are "land speculators".

If the farmers who attended the County Planning Commission meetings went to their legislators with the same information that they provided the Commission, we would very possibly see some emergency legislation passed. However, the farmers don't seem to be interested in this avenue as a viable solution to their problems.

Our legislators serve to assist us in solving problems that rest within their jurisdictions. They can only serve us when the problems are brought to their attention.

Many East County farmers claim that it is no longer economically feasible to farm the land there. Presently, A2 zoning allows them to break their "agricultural" land down to one acre parcels, which they then sell to developers who build houses on the parcels.

A2 zoning provides the farmers with a loophole in the zoning regulations that allows them to subdivide their land without filing a minor subdivision plan. They claim that there is nothing that can be done to profit from farming in the East County. That is true if the farmers do nothing to make farming profitable.

STATE PARK COMMISSION TO MEET HERE

The California State Park Commission will meet in Contra Costa County May 10 and 11 by invitation of the Board of Supervisors at the suggestion of the Save Mt. Diablo Committee and the County Rec. and Natural Resources Commission.

A tour of Mt. Diablo is planned for May 10. Next day, May 11, a public meeting will be held in the Concord City Council chambers, 1950 Parkside Avenue, starting at 9 a.m. Please be there to show your interest in expansion of Mt. Diablo State Park.

NEJEDLY INTRODUCES BILL TO EXPAND MT. DIABLO

Contra Costa State Senator John Nejedly has introduced Senate Bill 956, which would allocate $1 million for acquisition of additional land for Mt. Diablo State Park.

"Mt. Diablo State Park is a vital part of our open space in Contra Costa County and provides recreational facilities for countless people in the surrounding area," said Senator Nejedly.

"I feel that it is indeed critical to expand this state park now before the available land is lost forever to additional development.

"The push is presently being made for coastline property purchases, which certainly are also merited. However, we must not forget the heavily populated interior areas which need park facilities as well.

"Even more to the point in Contra Costa County, the board of supervisors is presently determining the uses and priorities of revenue sharing funds. If state assistance, as provided in this legislation, makes $1 million available, then the board may be further inclined to supplement such funding for immediate and necessary land acquisitions for Mt. Diablo State Park."

FREEWAY OVER LAS TRAMPAS STILL POSSIBLE

Dick Wilson

The issue of a freeway across Las Trampas Ridge still exists. That was evident on April 19, when the Metropolitan Transportation Commission held the last public hearing in this county prior to finalizing recommendations for transport plans in the Bay Region. The California Legislature requires the plans by June 30.

The meeting, held in Pittsburg, was chaired by Pittsburg Councilman Earl MacIntyre, one of two Contra Costa County members of the Commission. He represents city governments. Supervisor Kenny represents the county in this agency, which has authority to overrule and decide on any conflicts in transportation plans developed by local agencies in the 9-county Bay Region.

The meeting was attended by fewer than a hundred people--in contrast to 500 citizens at a previous meeting in Concord. Nonetheless, the input by citizen's groups and the reception by Commissioner MacIntyre and commission staff members was good.

This was a key meeting, since MTC had just begun assigning priorities to specific transportation issues. Commissioner MacIntyre enumerated four categories of priority for all transport facilities not already funded (such as the construction recently authorized by the State Highway Department on the portion of Rte. 4 in Contra Costa County known as "Blood Alley").

Category I includes priorities approved for implementation. Category II recognized priority needs for a facility, but requires further evaluation to determine the exact nature of the required construction, Category III recognizes issues that may exist, but that do not merit urgency for either planning evaluation or implementation. This is the category where that portion of Highway Corridor 93 on the State Master Plan between Alamo and St. Mary's College has been placed tentatively. Category IV issues are not even included in the plan.

As Commissioner MacIntyre emphasized, specific priorities have not been determined for all issues. The tentative listing merely indicates the direction of staff thinking.

During the discussion period, comments on various issues indicated audience representation from across the county. Among comments of interest were those on Rte. 93. Larry O'Brien of Danville, spokesman for CCRDC, a powerful coalition of homeowners and conservation organizations, made a strong recommendation that the portion of Rte. 93 proposed to cross Las Trampas Ridge behind Rossmoor be eliminated from the MTC plan. Dick Wilson of Walnut Creek reinforced that argument by reading letters from three conservation organizations into the record. The Sierra Club, Contra Costa Park Council, and Ecology Action Council of Rossmoor concurred that the part of Rte. 93 behind Rossmoor should be downgraded from tentative Category III to Category IV.

Among reasons argued for deleting that route are:

(1) Any freeway or expressway over that route would inevitably adversely affect the natural environment of Las Trampas Regional Wilderness Park, through pollution by noise and smog.

(2) Such a highway would also bisect one of the few large areas of open space remaining in central Contra Costa County--an area that may be acquired eventually as an expansion of Las Trampas Park.

(3) Under policies for reasonable growth, the economic justification for constructing such a new transportation route appears questionable.

Such an E-W highway might well encourage rampant, sprawling developments without significantly alleviating the demands for better N-S transport in Contra Costa County.

As a footnote intended to be free of partisan bias and in the community interest, the following facts are given. Because of pressure from many organizations, two of our legislators,--Senator Nejedly (Rep.), Assemblyman Boatwright (Dem.)--during their election campaigns favored legislation to eliminate the portion of Rte. 93 across Las Trampas Ridge.

After the election, our legislators backed away from that position, evidently because the County Board of Supervisors refused to endorse their position.

The hectic, recent history of transportation planning in this county indicates that the people may speak through their legislators, But if not satisfied they can take other avenues. One course that is open now is to communicate with MTC. Anyone having any suggestions on transportation planning, and expenditures for same, is invited to communicate with The Metropolitan Transportation Commission, Community Affairs Office, Hotel Claremont, Berkeley, CA 94705. Best take that action soon, since the MTC report is due in Sacramento by the last of June.

Open space legislation in Britain has secured extensive greenbelts around major cities and urban areas. London alone enjoys close to 2,000 square miles of greenbelt countryside in which no development incompatible with agriculture and recreation is permitted. Most of the protected land remains in private ownership. Fair compensation from the national treasury is payable to property owners for loss of the right to develop. Other European countries have undertaken land planning on a national scale to limit the economic and ecological waste of urban sprawl.

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Vol. 73, No. 6, Midsummer 1973

Park Council News

COUNCIL ELECTS NEW BOARD

The Park Council elected a new slate of officers and directors for 1973-74 at its June 1 annual dinner meeting. Dr. Edgar Wayburn, past president of the Sierra Club, spoke on progress toward completion of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

Here, for your convenience, are details of the new board. Please keep for reference.

President - Manfred Lindner, 32 Corte Nogal, Danville, 94526 (837-4444).

Vice Presidents - Bill Dickinson, 4261 Brentwood Circle, Concord, 94521 (689-4474).

Minot Tripp, 3936 Canyon Rd., Lafayette, 94549 (284-9238).

Joann K. Johnson, 860 Paradise Ct., Lafayette, 94549 (283-1542).

Recording Secretary - Katie Haubensak, 214 Greenwich Dr., Pleasant Hill, 94523 (939-8608).

Corresponding Secretary - Marna Stansberry, 845 Kirkcrest Rd., Danville, 94526 (837-4359).

Treasurer - John Gravell, 1850 Lacassie Ave., Walnut Creek, 94596 (937-3295).

Newsletter Editor - Patrick Whittle, 176 Waterman Circle, Danville, 94526 (837-3478).

Directors - Mary Bowerman, 970 Second St., Lafayette, 94549 (283-3403).

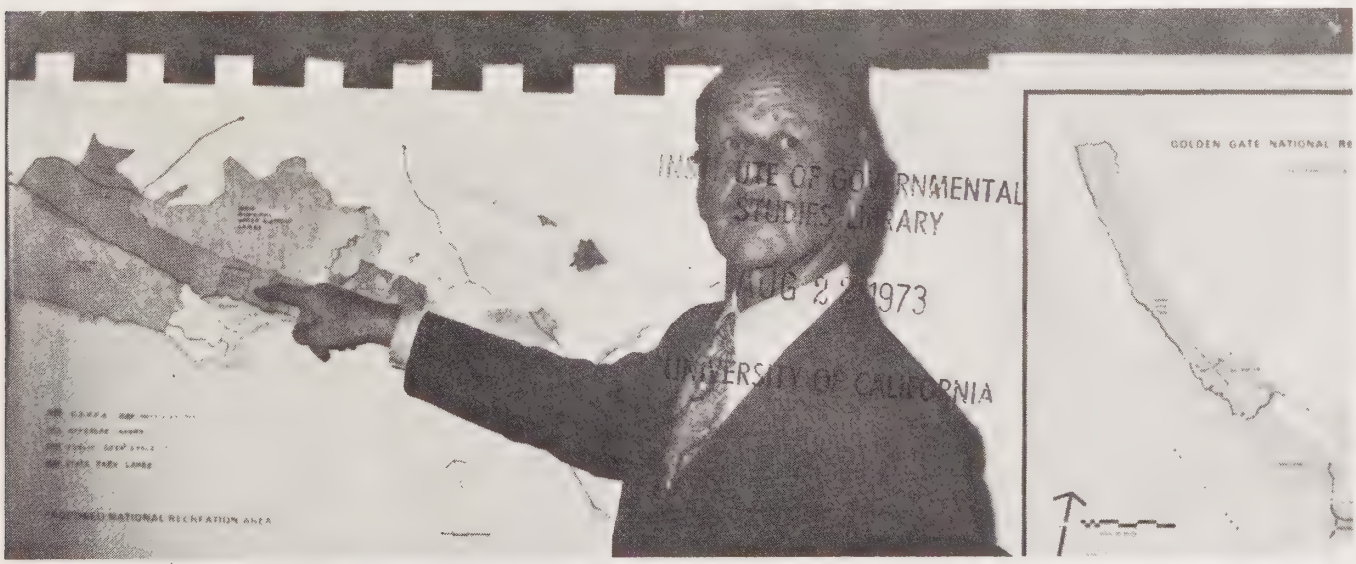
Alvin Burton, 9 Chadima Ct., Pleasant Hill, 94523 (934-5716).

Edward Gustely, 1320 Larch Ave., Moraga, 94556 (376-6505).

Richard Hackett, 311 Pippo Ave., Brentwood, 94513 (634-2396).

Jane Helrich, 40 Mt. Emory Ct., Clayton, 94517 (687-8873).

Peg Kovar, 1078 Hacienda Dr., Walnut Creek, 94598 (939-7637).



Dr. Edgar Wayburn discusses the Golden Gate National Recreation Area at the Park Council dinner.

Jane Putnam, 124 Devin Dr., Moraga, 94556 (376-4128).

Raydeen Randlett, 645 Morninghome, Danville, 94526 (837-7553).

Susan Watson, 36 Ardor Dr., Orinda, 94563 (254-4077).

Carl Weber, 43 Berkeley Ave., Orinda, 94563 (254-8473).

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Manfred Lindner

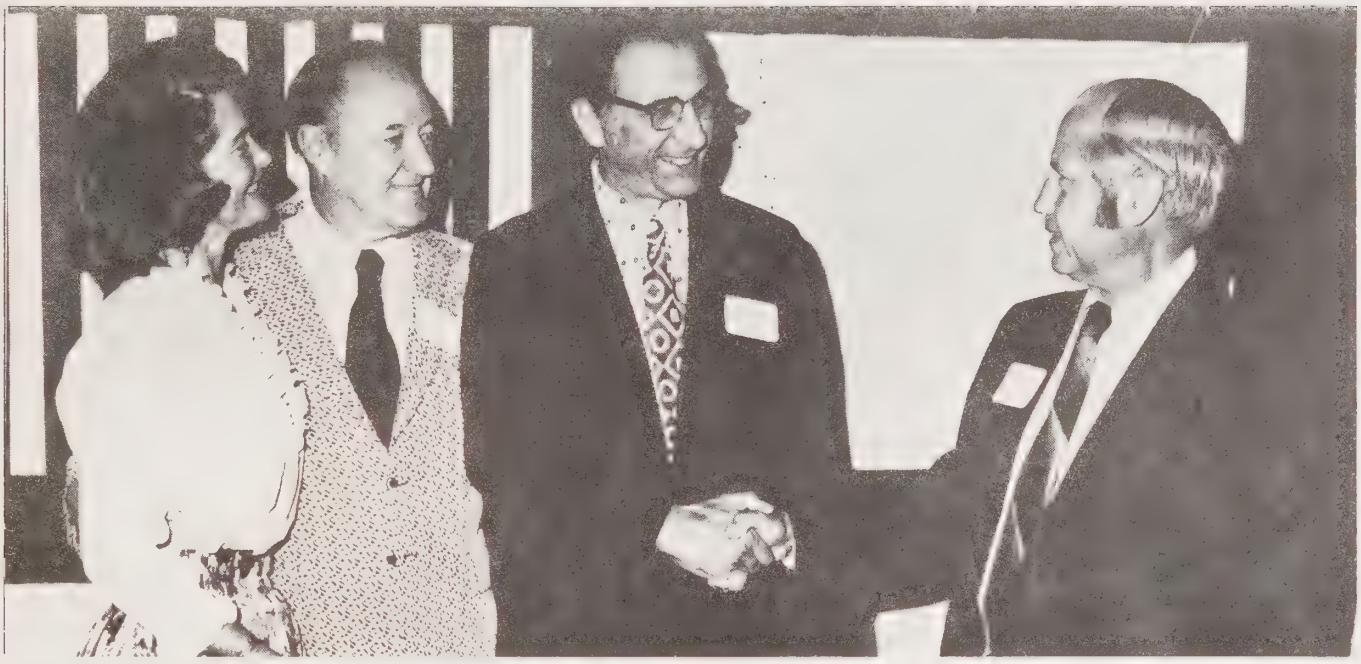
Summer, 1973. The Park Council is 21 years old. Almost none of us belonged in those days. Indeed, it is likely that none of us even thought about conservation and environmental concern. But it is a safe bet that the old Contra Costa Park and Recreation Council (as it was then known) was a modest but persistent light that refused to be blown out by the juggernaut of the postwar boom. I suspect that even among ourselves most would have considered such an effort as unrealistic and unnecessary. But someone had insight, and it was right. The rest is now history.

Today we are not alone, by any means. The Park Council is in fact almost overshadowed by the nearly countless groups, some fleeting, others permanent, that have rallied around a concern for the type of world we are creating and thus bequeathing to posterity. In practice we are constrained to the present and to our own immediate surroundings. What is done, is done. We are not going to restore the ravaged mountains of Eastern Kentucky. California, in general, and Contra Costa, in particular, must be our oyster.

We live in fateful times. Decisions being made at almost this instant will have a permanent effect not only upon our lives but upon those of our descendants in this county. Two major examples illustrate the point. These are the master plan for the East Bay Regional Park District, and the county's proposed conservation and open space element to its own general plan. So crucial are these issues that I hope every reader will independently avail himself of the facts and participate as an individual in the public hearings.

In the months ahead, the Park Council Board of Directors will review its direction and activities for the coming year. We must keep up with the times, and if this means new programs and policies, then so be it. I should like to remind each of you, however, that this is your Park Council. Your comments, suggestions, and participation will be warmly received. If you have new ideas which you would like to see implemented, let us know. We will do our best. But the important thing is to get involved. Sooner or later it all adds up to one thing: a better Contra Costa for the future.

New president Manny Lindner (left) accepts the gavel from outgoing prexy Bill Dickinson.



(From left) Sue Watson, Sup. Jim Moriarty, Manny Lindner, Al Burton.

(From left) Peg and Bill Dickinson, Peg Kovar, Sup. Jim Moriarty.

AGRICULTURAL PRESERVES - FACTS VERSUS FICTION

Joseph A. Barnwell, A.I.P.,
Contra Costa County Planning Department

At the hearings before the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors regarding agricultural preserves, speakers in opposition to the preserves frequently make two statements that so far have gone unchallenged by proponents of agricultural preserves. It seems appropriate at this time to get some facts out to challenge the statements. The first statement is that a person going into an agricultural preserve will not obtain a lowering of his taxes. The second statement is that by allowing the landowners to go into agricultural preserves, there will be an increased tax burden on the rest of the county. In the following paragraphs, facts will be presented that show how inaccurate the statements are.

Agricultural preserves will not lower taxes for the farmer?

A report prepared by the County Assesor shows that as of 1972 a total of 50,376 acres of land in the county was in agricultural preserves. Of this acreage, 1,285 were in land classed as prime agricultural land, and 49,024 acres were classed as other open space. The "adjusted assessed value" of the 50,376

Copy deadline for Sept.
Park Council News Aug. 17.

acres is stated to be $4,231,585. By the term "adjusted assessed value" the County Tax Assessor is stating what the assessed value would be if these lands were not in agricultural preserves. However, since these lands are in agricultural preserves, the assessed value, based upon the productivity of the land, is stated to be $1,130,005. We have then a reduction of $3,101,580 in assessment from what it would be if the lands were not placed in agricultural preserves. Roughly, this means that the lands in preserves have experienced a reduction to approximately 27 percent of the assessed value that they otherwise would have.

However, since most of the land now in agricultural preserves in the county is grazing land of rather low productivity, the assessed value based upon production is considerably lower than it would be if this land were in highly productive agricultural use. Farmers in the eastern part of the county who have highly productive agricultural land could not expect to get this amount of reduction in assessed value, but a substantial reduction in assessed value could be expected.

Reduction in agricultural land due to agricultural preserves places a burden of tax increase on the other residents of the county?

The statement is correct if one is willing to deal in trivialities. According to the "Contra Costa County Taxpayer", the total revenue received in the county for the 1971-72 period was $234,077,024. If we assume that those landowners in agricultural areas are paying a tax of $11 per hundred of assessed value, the $3,101,580 reduction in assessed value that they are enjoying would amount to a lowering of taxes by $340,000. This $340,000, when divided by $234,077,024, comes to .14 of 1 percent of the total revenue in the county. If you are paying property taxes of $1,000 per year, this means that you could be paying $1.40 more because of the 50,000 acres of land in agricultural preserves. If it seems unfair to you that those of us who live in the suburban parts of the county should have to pay one single penny to support the farmers in agricultural lands, keep in mind that the farmers in agricultural lands are paying taxes to help finance BART. Since the tax rate of BART is roughly 50¢ per hundred dollars of assessed value, the farmer is paying a lot more to help us ride BART than we are paying to help him grow meat.

PARKS FOR SAN RAMON VALLEY

The San Ramon Valley is the only large, heavily populated area in Contra Costa that does not have a local park agency. Recent meetings in the Valley have been called to explore how such an agency can be established. Alvin Burton, founder of the Contra Costa Park Council, has served as temporary chairman.

An election in April, 1972, would have established a Park Service Area in the Valley. Defeat of the proposal was possibly caused by the incorporation vote, which came soon after. Many people felt it unnecessary to form a Service Area only to dissolve it after incorporation. With the failure of incorporation, the need for a park agency became even more pressing.

A major reason for the renewed interest in a parl agency is the $160,000 in park dedication ordinance fees available for the Valley. With no agency qualified to disburse this money, it remains unused and in time subject to some losses. Also, it was pointed out in the meetings that other sources of funds, such as AB 920 (Open Space) and the 1974 State Bond Act, might provide additional park money.

A steering committee was elected. It consists of Jim Kain (Chairman), Eric Hasseltine, Kempton Russell, Sally Germain, and Ed Best. They will consider the further steps to be taken in developing a Park Agency for the Valley.

Park Council News is published ten times a year by the Contra Costa Park Council at Walnut Creek, California (President: Manfred Lindner, Danville, 837-4444). Design and production by Patrick Whittle Associates, Walnut Creek (933-2295).

Editor: Patrick Whittle. Art Director: James W. Johnson. Associate Editor: Raydean Randlett. Editorial Assistant: Brian Murphy.

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Vol. 73, No. 7, September 1973

Park Council News

PARK PERSONALITY OF THE MONTH - AL BURTON

Manfred Lindner

With this issue we begin what we hope will be a series of articles on local personalities who have played important roles in local conservation issues. To no one's surprise, we decided to start with Al Burton, founder and past president of the Park Council. What MAY come as something of a surprise to most readers is that our story is one of defeat for the conservation cause.

This story is concentrated into the past six months. At that time, Burton reached retirement age but felt that he still had at least a few good years left in him, and that maybe they could be devoted unstintingly to conservation in Contra Costa County. After many discussions with county officials, they decided to engage him on a three-month trial basis in a part-time consultant capacity to the Planning Staff and to the Recreation and Natural Resources Commission. This decision was approved by the Board of Supervisors over the strong objection of Mr. Linscheid, who felt that the position was created to fit Burton's qualifications. When the three-month period elapsed, the supervisors voted 3-2 to retain Burton on a one year contract. (Supervisors Linscheid and Dias opposed Al.)

End of story? Not at all. While the decision to retain Al was approved, the supervisors had not yet voted to sign his contract. Meantime, Supervisor Moriarity, one of Al Burton's supporters in the matter, suffered a heart attack and could not be present on August 27 when the issue of signing was forced to a vote. Result? A 2-2 vote with Linscheid and Dias now the victors.

Al answered a few questions you might be asking:

Q. Did he know about the latest Board action?

A. He read it in the local paper but had no prior knowledge of the hearing.

Q. Was the item published in the supervisor's calendar?

A. He could find it nowhere in the agenda. Possibly, it was buried in an item labeled "Consider Recommendations of County Administrator."

Q. Does he intend to take any action?

A. Yes, he hopes by letter to persuade the board to reconsider.

Q. Will the non-renewal have any immediate environmental consequences?

A. The Recreation and Natural Resources Commission expects him to lay the groundwork for the coming commission hearings on the 1974 State Park Bond elections which, if approved by the voters, would provide Contra Costa County with $2.5 million to be spent on parks and recreation. It would have been his responsibility to obtain input from the cities, the Mayors' Conference, and EBRPD on how the money should be spent.

There is a bit of irony in Al's story. Eight years ago Contra Costa County received $1.1 million in a similar bond election. $400,000 of that went to start a new park, now called Las Trampas Wilderness Regional Park. And the person mainly responsible for pulling that grass-roots effort together was Al Burton.

During his recent three-month appointment with the County, Burton set the wheels in motion to study the possibility for a Park Service Area in the San Ramon Valley. This would provide an outlet for Park Dedication funds that might otherwise be returned to the developers. San Ramon Valley is one of the few heavily populated and rapidly growing areas with no neighborhood parks program and no feasible means of using funds earmarked for that purpose.

The action of Supervisors Linscheid and Dias is seen as a setback for conservation. Our county needs Burton. Let us hope this decision will be reversed.

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HIKE ON MOUNT DIABLO

Sunday, Sept. 23, the Park Council will join the Sierra Club in the first hike of this season - to Oyster Ridge on the flanks of Mt. Diablo. (This hike should be an important sequal to the Sept. slide show program). Six miles and a 1,000 ft. climb on Blackhawk Ranch. Meet at 9 a.m. at Alpha Beta Shopping Center, Diablo Road, Danville. Reservations required. Molly Reeves (254-1428) or Susie Watson (254-4077).

COAL MINES LITIGATION CONTINUES

Joann K. Johnson

No decision regarding sand-mining claims in the newest park under the East Bay Regional Park system has been forthcoming from the U.S. Department of Interior. Instead the Department's Board of Land Appeals has ordered further hearings in Sacramento to determine the validity of five strip sand-mining claims held by Utah miner Stephen Kosanke. In 1964 the Kosanke Sand Corporation filed a mineral patent application for these claims located in the northern half of Section 8 in eastern Contra Costa County.

This action by the Appeals Board, in essence, sets aside its previous decision of Sept. 3, 1971, which stated that Kosanke's claims were valid and the Board remanded the case to Sacramento for issuance of a patent. The decision was a reversal of the Bureau of Land Management's Sept. 16, 1970, ruling that the claims were null and void. The BLM hearing examiner rejected the patent application, at that time, for lack of evidence of a discovery of valuable and marketable silica sand deposits.

The Board of Land Appeals in their new decision, a 33 page document, concluded that additional evidence is necessary to determine whether a discovery of a valuable mineral deposit has been made on the claims.

"On the record before us, we find such a determination is impossible, and the evidence is insufficient to make a final determination as to the validity of the claims," according to the Appeals Board.

Commenting on the conservationist contention that an environmental impact statement was required, the Board declared, "The law does not require the preparation of such a statement in this case; however, this does not foreclose consideration of environmental costs."

Environmental considerations, although not included in the 1872 Mining Law, are a prime concern of the EBRPD, Sierra Club, Park Council, California Native plant society, and County of Contra Costa. Representatives of these organizations and agencies traveled to Washington, D.C., last year for the May 14 hearing before the Appeals Board on the matter of granting a mining land patent within the heart of an area scheduled to become a regional park.

Testimony supporting briefs that had been submitted by the environmental groups and by Kosanke was heard at that time. This recent decision was a result of that hearing and the Appeals Board examiners are requesting that a new hearing judge consider whether such a finding of a valuable and marketable mineral deposit existed as of Oct. 24, 1964.

No date has been set for the Sacramento hearing, and park district officials think that it may be as far away as a year. However, they are of the opinion that this new decision could be interpreted as a vote in favor of the park position -- a mining operation within the boundary of the park would undermine the integrity of the wilderness nature of the region.

Mining promoter Kosanke has expressed dissatisfaction with the decision, stating that it "only reflects the lack of guts that such a board should possess." He intends to continue the fight for his claims filed on the 160 acres in the heart of the park.

The claims are on the site of the old Black Diamond mining operation, where the coulter pine reaches its northern most limit. Coulters grow only in a few scattered, selected sites on the west coast from Mexico to Mt. Diablo, the Nortonville area being one of them. Conservationists contend that mining activities at this location could totally destroy the remaining trees.

On December 11, 1972, the Board of Directors of the EBRPD voted to buy 2123 acres to be included in the regional park. Much of the land was purchased from the Ginochio Brothers, a prominent ranching family. Included in the acquisition is 100 acres of Southern Pacific property and a 40 acre BLM parcel.

Recently, the historic Somersville cemetery, which had been deeded to the county in 1943, was turned over to the park district by the Board of Supervisors. Restoration of the cemetery will be included in development plans for the park.

Coal was discovered in the rolling foothills east of Mt. Diablo before the gold rush. The families who lived in the region and worked the mines were primarily from England and Wales, where coal mining also was their livelihood. The Black Diamond District, as it was known in the mid- 1800's, included the mining towns of Nortonville, Somersville, Stewartsville, Empire, West Hartley, and Judsonville. At one time as many as 10,000 people inhabited these six communities. But the towns have long disappeared and remain as only names on outdated maps.

Soft coal, dug from the hard, brown earth, supplied the fuel that moved the ships and supplies up the San Joaquin-Sacramento rivers to the gold country. One might say that coal, the black diamond of eastern Contra Costa county, made the gold rush possible.

Then the inevitable happened--the discovery of hard coal in the northwest, A major migration took place as the families left the windswept foothills for the new fields. There was a short revival of mining activities at Somersville during the late 1800's which lasted until about 1904.....That ended, too.

The buildings tumbled. The wind sang sad songs as it blew away memories of a passing era. The grass and trees grew back and covered the scars created by the presence of the mines. An abundance of wildlife roamed the foothills, living undisturbed, until man returned to farm and fence much of the land.

Now, 130 years after the discovery of coal in California, and through the efforts of many individuals, this historic region will be preserved and given park status. The wilderness quality will be nourished, visitors will be able to walk among the memories that were realities to another generation, and the wildlife will roam free and protected.

EBMUD HOLDS LINE ON WATER RATES

Basic property tax rates for the East Bay Municipal Utility District will be the same for the next 12 months, according to an announcement by the utility district. Tax rates will be 14.5 cents per $100 of assessed valuation in Alameda County and 15.9 cents in Contra Costa County. The difference in rates is due to differing assessment ratios in the two counties. Both tax rates are among the lowest in the history of the utility district, and are for fiscal year 1973-74, which ends June 30 of next year.

COUNTY OMBUDSMAN PROPOSED

An initiative petition is now being circulated in the county to put the issue of a county ombudsman on the ballot next spring, according to Bill Smith of The People's Advocate. Al Schiff, Walnut Creek, asked the Board last January to establish the office of Ombudsman and pointed out what this agent could do to make local government more responsible. If you want to help, call Al Schiff at 935-3935.

HUGE PARK PROPOSED FOR MOTORCYCLE ENTHUSIASTS

The state, acting in concert with EBRPD, might seek to acquire the two-county 1,560-acre Carnegie Cycle Park 15 miles southeast of Livermore as a Vehicular Recreation Area. As a holding action, EBRPD has agreed to apply for some $150,000 in state matching moneys for at least one off-highway Vehicular Recreation Area in an undesignated location and for bicycle trails. Since Carnegie Park, which sprawls over into San Joaquin County, is outside EBRPD boundaries, the state would in all probability take title and the Park District would operate it.

Advantages of the Carnegie layout, according to California Recreation Trails Committee member Dougald Thamer, are that it is operational and "it could be expanded to 10,000 acres if necessary." It is privately operated now. Thamer explained that more than $700,000 will be available in state funds by next year for Vehicular Recreation Area purchases

DUES DUE

Raydeen Randlett

Do you know we do need money, as all do to function? What is due now we call dues which do get this newsletter to you. And we do care that you're kept up to date; do you? If so, please do send dues: $5 per member, $2 per student.

PARKS FOR SAN RAMON VALLEY

Valley Committee For Parks is polling citizens of the San Ramon Valley, regarding parks. Among the important guestions being asked are: Does the valley need local parks? What kind of parks? And the clincher...Will citizens tax themselves in this time of fiscal fiasco, for parks?

Park dedication funds allocated for the Danville - Alamo area cannot be disbursed until a legal body has been formed to receive the funds. Parks cannot be established without money for insurance and maintenance. Park dedication funds may only be used for land acquisition.

The serious problem facing the committee is this: land is being developed at such an explosive rate that action must be taken soon before prices soar out of the reach of park funds.

BLACKHAWK DONATES WILDERNESS SCHOOL SITE

Blackhawk Development Company has donated a "wilderness" school site to the San Ramon Valley Unified School District. Blackhawk president Robert Carrau said that the company is "recognizing its responsibility to the community." He explained that the wilderness school, located on the edge of the development, uses both a natural area and part of Mt. Diablo to preserve the wilderness feeling.

The Blackhawk property covers approximately 5,000 acres and is planned to contain an estimated 4,380 units. It is scheduled for completion in 1988.

NEWS IN BRIEF

- Would you spend $675 to get $1,200,000? You bet you would; and so did EBRPD. The matter came up before the District Directors when they approved a $1,000 allocation to replenish the land and Water Acquisition and Management Department's fund earmarked for Pt. Pinole Regional Park. The fund was down to $100.

  Hulet C. Hornbeck, EBRPD Chief of Land and Water Acquisition explained that the $675 was spent to obtain accelerated payment of $1,200,000 in federal Land and Water Conservation funds through the state. Such items as appraisal review, segregation of assessed valuations, a breakdown of the appraisals, and trips to Sacramento ran up the $675 bill.

- EBRPD hopes to obtain between $40,000 and $50,000 from the State Department of Transportation's 1973-74 bicycle trails fund. General Manager Richard Trudeau suggested that trail work might be undertaken in any of these areas: Tilden Regional Park NIKE site; continuation of the Alameda Creek trail into Niles Canyon; Alameda Beach; Contra Loma Regional Park; or Lake Chabot.

- It took workers on the Tilden Regional Park Golf Course less than two days to put the links back in playing condition after massive vandalism early in August. All 18 greens on the long, hilly course were cut and gouged by the vandals, and the words "The Hellfire Gang" were chopped into the sod of the putting green.

  According to Manager Frank McHugh, no golfer was turned away, even on the morning of August 7th when the damage was discovered. "Our men came at daylight and started work on the greens," said McHugh. "They did a terrific job." He confirmed, "The attitude of most of the people that have called is that they can't understand how someone could or would want to do this."

- An EBRPD life guard won top honors in this year's California Life Guard Games in Sacramento on August 25. Mark Crogahan, 21, of Hayward, took first place in the all-around standings, which combined scores from a number of events.

Sep. 12, Wed. - Valley Committee for Parks, Community Center, Danville, 7:45 p.m.

Sep. 13, Thu. - Park Council Board Meeting, Contra Costa Water District offices, 2700 Concord Avenue, Concord, 8:00 p.m.

Sep. 19, Fri. - Copy deadline for Oct. newsletter.

Sep. 20, Thu. - Program meeting, "Scenes and Wildlife of Mt. Diablo," Main Auditorium, Contra Costa Water Bldg., 2700 Concord Ave., Concord, 8:00 p.m.*

Sep. 23, Sun. - Hike to Oyster Ridge, Mt. Diablo.*

Sep. 26, Wed. - Citizens Task Force meeting on policies and recommendations, Oakland Garden Center, Lake Merritt, 8:00 p.m.

Oct. 13, Sat. - Sierra Club Natural Science Section trip to Mt. Diablo. Study trees, esp. oaks. Donation of $10 (tax-deductible) to Sierra Club Foundation, Save Mt. Diablo Fund. Phone Leonora Strohmaier at 525-0522 for details.

Oct. 14, Sun. - The People's Advocate champagne gala, Heather Farms clubhouse, Walnut Creek, 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. Entertainment, tasty morsels, bubbly: $5.

Oct. 16, Tue. - Citizens Task Force: final recommendations to East Bay Regional Park District.

Oct, 17, Wed. - Program meeting: Dr. Gary Bogue on endangered species.*

* See story for details.

EDUCATION PROGRAM COMMITTEE OFF TO AN EARLY FALL START

Education Program Committee chairwoman Jane Helrich has announced the following program meetings for September and October:

Thursday, Sept. 20 - Park Council and Save Mt. Diablo Committee will co-sponsor a multiple-projection slide show on little-known scenes and wildflowers of Mt. Diablo, at 8 p.m., Contra Costa Water Building, 2700 Concord Ave., Concord. Refreshments.

Wednesday, Oct. 17 - Park Council and SANE will co-sponsor a lecture by Dr. Gary Bogue entitled "Endangered Species". Dr. Bogue is well known to Contra Costans for his rescue-and-rehabilition program for wild animals that have been injured or met with other misfortune. At 7:30 P.m. Refreshments.

DOWNTOWN DANVILLE'S FIRST PARK IN OFFING

Downtown Danville may soon have its first park - a tot-lot for pre-schoolers at the Community Senter - according to the Livermore Independent.

The small play area had originally been planned for Rancho Romero School in Alamo, but early this month was nixed by a school district official who said the site, far to the rear of the school, was too open to vandalism and too far from easy access.

Backers of the park include the San Ramon Valley Jaycees and other civic groups. They approached the Community Center, which needed a tot lot to meet the requirements for its soon-to-open pre-school.

PARK COUNCIL CHAIRPERSONS SET FOR 1973-74

The following Board members will serve for the coming year as committee chairpersons for the Park Council:

1. Newsletter - Pat Whittle
2. Membership - Al Burton
3. Hiking Program - Sue Watson
4. Publicity - Raydean Randlett
5. Educational Program - Jane Helrich
6. Legislative Liaison - Mike Tripp
7. Public Relations - Carl Weber

Please call the appropriate chairperson to offer your services or seek information. See the August newsletter for phone numbers of all Board members.

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Park Council News

PARK OF THE MONTH--POINT PINOLE DEDICATED

Michael Ackley

Dedication of Point Pinole Regional Park by Interior Secretary Rogers C.B. Morton marked a dramatic stage in the maturation of the 928-acre bayside park, which has been open since July 21.

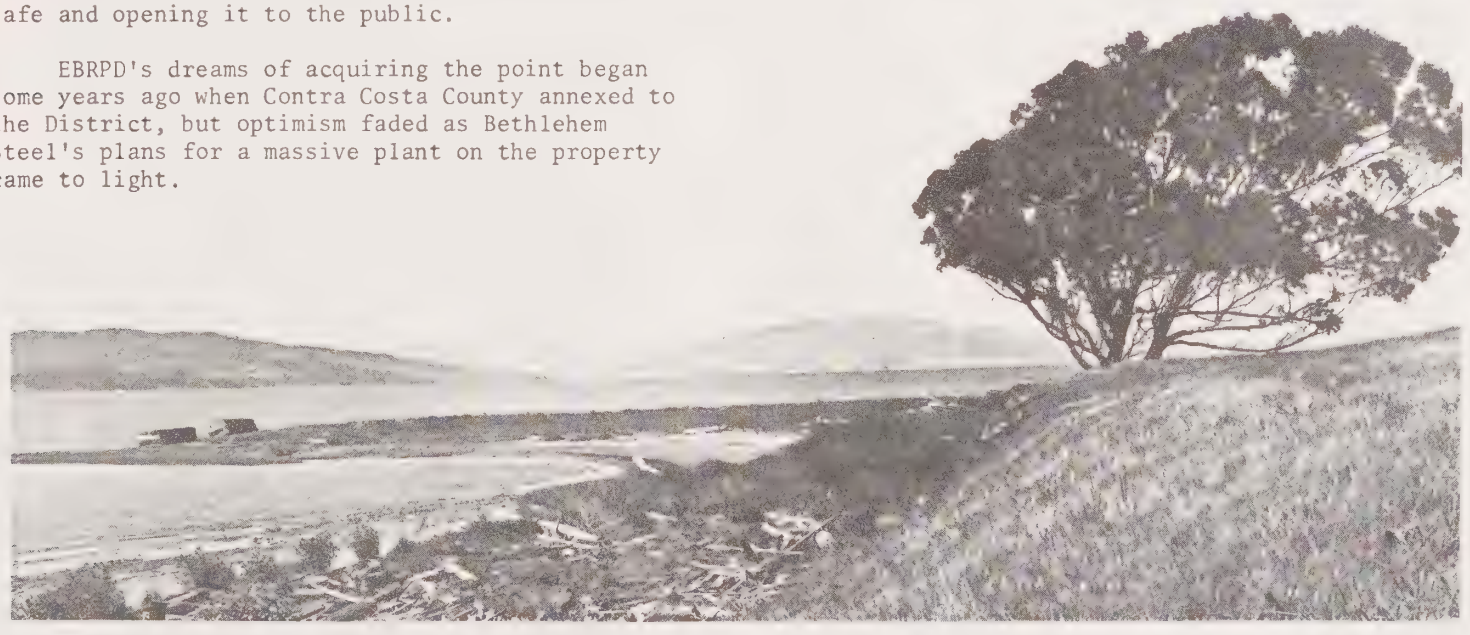
The park now is in an interim phase during which East Bay Regional Park District officials will observe use patterns on the point. Their observations will form the basis for the ultimate draft of a Point Pinole master plan.

Since acquiring the park, with its 3 1/2 miles of shoreline, nearly a year ago, the District has concentrated its efforts on making it safe and opening it to the public.

EBRPD's dreams of acquiring the point began some years ago when Contra Costa County annexed to the District, but optimism faded as Bethlehem Steel's plans for a massive plant on the property came to light.

Steady work, however, surmounted the gloomy prospects after Bethlehem put the land up for sale. The steel firm eventually agreed to sell the 928 acres for $5,460,000. At the same time the District acquired an $81,000 option, expiring November 15, 1975, to buy an additional 75 acres for $459,000 dollars.

Although Point Pinole had been an industrial site since the 1880's the very nature of the industry ensconced there, explosives production, helped maintain the area in a state of preservation unique on the bay shoreline. Historic remnants of that industry remain on the Point: massive revetments and concrete bunkers used in the production of nitroglycerine and other dynamite.



Some of the finest views of the Bay can now be enjoyed from Point Pinole.

Because the industry was hazardous, the explosives plant was sprawled over hundreds of acres, preventing high-density development.

Large groves of eucalyptus trees surrounded the bunkers--some say to confine any accidental blasts--giving the naturally grassy point a sylvan atmosphere.

Some of the bunkers were quite deep; some were studded with projecting iron work; others merely were unsightly. At one place there was a huge heap of rubble where a steel reinforced chimney had been dynamited.

EBRPD's Plans, Design and Construction Department spent weeks on the point bulldozing some of the more dangerous and ugly bunkers underground, removing a road that bisected a large meadow, and grading the land back to its natural contours.

Some of the more picturesque bunkers were saved for their historical value, and a couple of the larger ones were converted to picnic areas where EBRPD residents now are able to find shelter from the on-shore breezes that often sweep the area.

Park Foreman Ray Dawson has his crews engaged in a systematic cleanup of the new park, with emphasis on beach clearing. Each low tide finds his men out on the tidal flat of China cove removing old tires, plumbing fixtures, wire, and other detritus of the generation-long industrial era.

Dawson also is involved in a program of outreach to the largely minority-populated Parchester Village, adjacent to the 161-acre "Little Point Pinole" Regional Park. He is encouraging Parchester residents and other park users to take the time to express their ideas about how Point Pinole should be developed for park goers, present and future.

PARK PERSONALITY OF THE MONTH--DICK TRUDEAU

Michael Ackley

Richard C. Trudeau, formerly in the diplomatic service, and longtime public relations expert, was named General Manager of the two-county East Bay Regional Park District in May of 1969.

He was Director of Public Relations for the United Bay Area Crusade for a decade prior to coming to EBRPD in 1964, where he first held the position of Director of Public Information under then-General Manager William Penn Mott, Jr., who later became Director of the State Department of Parks and Recreation. He continued in that capacity under Irwin Luckman, the next general manager, and was elevated to the newly created position of Assistant General Manager for Administration and Public Affairs in 1967. He served as Acting General Manager for three months during Luckman's tenure.

When Luckman left in May of 1968, Trudeau was named Acting General Manager, a position he held until his confirmation in the position on a permanent basis.

Trudeau played a leading role in the campaigns that resulted in annexation of Contra Costa County and Pleasanton Township to the Park District. He has also been actively concerned with EBRPD's legislative program at Sacramento.

His tenure as general manager has been marked by a burgeoning of EBRPD acreage, including two outstanding Contra Costa County additions in the Coal Mines region in the county's eastern sector and at Pt. Pinole on the San Francisco Bay Shore.

He also has overseen several environmental protection battles, including those over the proposed Apperson Ridge Quarry, the Briones power line, and the on-going dispute over a projected silica sand strip mine adjacent to the Coal Mines Park.

A major victory of his administration was the passage in the State legislature of AB 925, allowing a phased 10-cent tax increase for new parks. Half of the increase is in force, and EBRPD is progressing toward adoption of a comprehensive master plan that will allow the levy of the second five cents.

"The job is demanding," comments Trudeau, who often works nights and weekends, "but it has its rewards, not the least of which are the relationships I enjoy with many dedicated environmentalists in Contra Costa and Alameda Counties."

Trudeau's honors include:

Silver Anvil Award of the Public Relations Society of America; Named by Time magazine as one of the nation's 100 "Outstanding Newsmakers;"

Named "Outstanding Young Man of the Year" by the San Francisco Junior Chamber of Commerce; Member, Key Man Society (Junior Chamber of Commerce "Outstanding Young Man of the Year" group), San Francisco; Public Relations Gold Key Award; Contra Costa Taxpayers Association's 1970 "Outstanding Public Service Award."

He holds membership in:

Public Relations Society of America, San Francisco-Bay Area Chapter. (Vice-President, Member of Board of Directors); San Francisco Public Relations Round Table; American Management Association; University of Washington Alumni Association; University of Syracuse Alumni Association; Oakland Chamber of Commerce (Environmental Affairs Committee): San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission Advisory Committee.

FREEWAY THREAT TO LAS TRAMPAS DELETED

Manny Lindner

The controversial Burton-Alamo Route 93 freeway threat has finally been eliminated from the state highway sistem to the relief of nearly everyone. With the signing by Governor Reagan of Senator Nejedly's bill SB 1321 on September 19, fear of a high-speed thoroughfare slicing to within a quarter mile of Las Trampas Regional Park, or bisecting potential parkland have been laid to rest, at least for the near future.

Public efforts to eliminate the plans have had a roller-coaster history since original inclusion of the proposed route in the County general plan of the fifties. After the route was adopted as part of the state highway system opponents received a jolt when they learned that elimination of the route could only come about by state legislation.

As a result of efforts by the Alamo Improvement Association, aided by the Ecology Action Council of Rossmoor, CCRDC, CARROTS, the Sierra Club, and the Park Council, Senator Nejedly prepared legislation to elimante the portion of Route 93 from Burton to Alamo. But setbacks were to occur; the supervisors, acting on the advice of the County Public Works Department, voted last December against recommending deletion. At least one pro-route editorial appeared in a large local paper.

These actions notwithstanding, Nejedly introduced his bill in May, after the February hearings of the State Highway Commission in Sacramento.

Senator Nejedly, Assemblyman Daniel Boatwright, and Assemblyman John Knox, deserve a vote of thanks from all conservationists for moving the bill successfully through the assembly and senate. Letters of thanks to these legislators from our readers would be most appropriate. Write to the legislators at this address: State Capitol, Sacramento, CA 95814.

CENTRAL COUNTY CITIES PROPOSE REGIONAL PARKS

Sally Germain

The cities of Pleasant Hill, Concord, Walnut Creek, Lafayette, and Clayton recently made a joint recommendation to add new sites to the East Bay Regional Park District master plan. In making their proposal to members of the Citizens Task Force and the Board of Directors of the District, the cities were acting on the belief that, as fine as the master plan proposals of Overview are for the central county, they just do not go far enough in meeting the needs of the rapidly expanding population.

The first and major recommendation of the three-part proposal is a gigantic enlargement of two sites mentioned in Overview's report: the Castel Rock Recreation Park and the Arroyo del Cerro future reservoir site. This proposal, called the Shell Ridge-Lime Ridge-Diablo Foot hills parklands, would encompass 6,000 acres, of which area all but about 10% lies outside city limits.

The property is valued by Concord and Walnut Creek for its visual integrity, size, proximity to population, and suitability for regional park use. Access is available from local collector and arterial streets in several directions. The distance from the cities to Mt. Diablo along the ridges is largely uninterrupted. Hikers, riders, students of nature, and picnickers would be able to use many isolated trails that would link the fossil-rich slopes and headwaters of Mt. Diablo creeks with Briones and Las Trampas parks.

The cities wish to spare these acres from development, which generally would average one dwelling unit per acre, should it occur. Bringing utilities in is not easy. Land values range from about $230/acre to $6,500/acre.

The second part of the proposal is an expansion of Briones Regional Park toward the east and south above both Pleasant Hill and Lafayette. Pleasant Hill citizens expressed the desire for wilderness preservation and trails into Briones during preparation for the Park and Recreation District tax rate override election taking place this month. The park would be enlarged by 70% if the full proposal is effected. It is mostly steeply sloped hillside and seasonal streambeds, sheltering a wide variety of hardwood and evergreen trees. Access for trails from both neighboring cities is considered good. Visual values are significant for the entire central county. Landowners, who are few, are beginning to feel pressures to sell for development. Brookwood, a site recommended by Overview for providing recreation and staging areas to the north toward Martinez, receives support also.

The third section of the five cities proposal pertains to the regional trail system. The cities want a clear District policy on policing and maintenance of regional trails, and they suggest the

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Oct. 13, Sat. - Sierra Club tree-study trip to Mt. Diablo. Details: Leonora Strohmaier (525-0522).

Oct. 14, Sun. - People's Advocate champagne gala, Heather Farms Clubhouse, Walnut Creek, 5 to 8 p.m. Entertainment, tasty morsels, bubbly: $5.

Oct. 17, Wed. - Park Council and SANE program meeting: Dr. Gary Bogue on endangered species; 7:30 p.m., main auditorium, Sun Valley Shopping Center, Concord.

Oct. 19, Fri. - Copy deadline for Nov. News.

Oct. 20, Sat. - Park Council hike: Mt. Diablo by way of N. Peak; 6 miles. Bring lunch and liquids; wear stout shoes. Meet 10 a.m. in lower parking lot at Mt. Diablo summit. (Be prepared to pay entrance fee at park gate.)

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following:

(a) Making three route expansions to coordinate inner city trails with open space lands: Briones-Acalanes Ridge, between Lafayette and Walnut Creek; Pine Hollow Road-Mt. Diablo Foothills, passing a grove of Coulter pines; and Mt. Diablo Creekbed-Cowell College site.

(b) Placing both the hiking-bicycling trail from Briones Park to Bollinger Canyon in the high priority list.

(c) Declaring as the policy of the District that it will assume responsibility for route planning, right-of-way acquisition, construction, maintenance, and policing of regional trails, except where they share a right-of-way with other public surface use.

Following the formal presentation of these proposals, the Task Force members were treated to a well-coordinated field trip to view the Mt. Diablo ridge and foothill areas, taking in Indian Valley and Castle Rock Park in Walnut Creek, Lime Ridge overlooking the Concord BART station, and the now defunct Mitchell Canyon recreation park south of Clayton.

At the next Task Force business meeting, Park Council member Brian Murphy, who is a member of the Task Force and the Walnut Creek Park and Recreation Commission, placed a successful motion before the house to accept the mid-county proposal conceptually as part of a Master Plan for the Regional Park District.

The Lafayette bond issue covers different sites generally. Walnut Creek is considering how to raise money locally, as well, for open space preservation. Concord is just now organizing a citizen's study group to accomplish what Walnut Creek has.

NOBEL PRIZEWINNER TO SPEAK

Dr. Glenn T. Seaborg, Nobel laureate in nuclear chemistry and former chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, will address the Park Council in November. His talk, illustrated with slides and motion pictures, will describe his recent travels in the Chinese People's Republic. See next month's newsletter for details of this exciting program.

STAFF

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Nobel laureate Dr. Glenn T. Seaborg is greeted by Chou En-lai in Peking. Seaborg, a Park Council member, will talk about his travels in the People's Republic of China to the Council and its friends on Monday, November 19. Full details inside.

DON'T MISS HEARING SEABORG!

Glenn T. Seaborg, winner of the Nobel Prize for Chemistry and an ardent conservationist, will be guest speaker at the Monday, November 19, Park Council program. Dr. Seaborg recently visited China where he was received by Chou En-lai.

Seaborg's astonishing list of credits cannot be enumerated here; however, readers may wish to know that he is University Professor of Chemistry and Associate Director of the Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory at U.C., Berkeley. His publications include more than a dozen books and over 200 scientific papers and encyclopedia articles. Seaborg also serves on the Citizens Task Force assigned to develop a 20 year master plan for the EBRPD, and is Chairman of Citizens for Urban Wilderness Areas.

Sharing his China adventure with Park Council members and friends, Dr. Seaborg will discuss environmental problems here and in China. The Park Council feels honored to present such a distinguished speaker and urges all members to bring friends to this exciting evening (8:00 p.m.) at the Contra Costa Water Building, 2700 Concord Avenue, Concord. Anyone needing transportation should contact Raydean Randlett at 837-7553.

COME AND JOIN US

Al Burton

As a reader of the Park Council News you are familiar with the outstanding work that the Park Council has been doing. There are all too few people and organizations working to preserve the beauty of our county, so it is very necessary to encourage those who are making the effort. Your membership in the Park Council will place you among the select few who feel a concern for the future of Contra Costa

Once a year we include a membership envelope with the News. These memberships and contributions are the sole support of the Park Council. About half the dues go to publish the News, and the rest supports the Council in its other efforts.

Please note that there is a place to check if you would like to participate more fully in our activities. The Council needs your membership check, but it needs your active participation even more.

We believe that you will find an association with the Park Council people a most stimulating experience. We hope you not only join, but take part in the effort. (If you have sent in your dues recently, many thanks. Kindly pass the envelope to a friend.)

HIKING PROGRAM PERKS UP

Susan Watson

"Here we are - and ready for a rare, good, healthy march - or a hike, if y' like to call it... I know we're here, but we've got to get owr yonder; so let's go!" Harry Lauder, Scots Hiking Medleys.

"The mountains also shall bring peace, and the little hills righteousness unto the people." Psalm 72.

After several years absence from Park Council "doings" we are beginning again a scheduled hiking program that will take us from the tops of mountains to the depths of caves and from the old slag heaps of coal mines to waterfalls and wildflowers in the Spring. Interested? Then, look for the regular announcements of hikes in the calendar of events each month.

Each hike will be different in length and location and your hiking committee will endeavor to give enough variety to suit the novice or the most experienced hiking enthusiast. Descriptions of coming hikes will appear in the newsletter monthly, along with details of meeting place, approximate length, etc. We are also coordinating with the Diablo Regional Group of the Sierra Club in their hiking program, so that our members will have wide opportunities for outings.

In mid-October, we took a 7 mile hike circling Mt. Diablo from the summit parking lot to North Peak, around the upper reaches of Wild Oat and Donner Canyons and Deer Flat, to Juniper Campground, and up the "hidden" path back to the parking lot. The light rain on the previous night had cleansed the air and the landscape, and our views all around the mountain were made doubly spectacular by the sunlight playing through the clouds.

Last winter's rains have given us a bountiful crop of seed pods, tassels, capsules, berries, etc., and all were in abundance on this pleasant walk. Our generally soft fall colorings are pretty wild this year with the chamise in vibrant russet red, the native grape in all hues of yellows and reds, and the white feathery whorls of clematis vines appearing everywhere.

On Saturday, November 17, Dick Hackett will lead a trip to the Indian Caves southwest of Brentwood. These fascinating caves, which were used by generations of Native Americans and by both Mexican and "Anglo" banditos, are on private land. The landowner has graciously allowed us to see the caves, but asks to know how many will be attending. As there will not be much walking, this will be a family hike for all ages. Call Dick at 634-2396 (Brentwood) or Sue Watson at 254-4077 (Orinda) for necessary reservations by November 12th. Meet at 1 p.m. at Brentwood City Park, center of town.

On Sunday, December 9, Hulet Hornbeck, Chief of the Land Acquisition Department at the East Bay Regional Park District, will show us parts of the new 2123 acre addition to the Black Diamond Mines Regional Historic Park. The area, which is not yet opened to the general public, includes the site of Stewartsville, an old coal mining town, and the remains of the mining activity of by-gone years. The hike will be moderate to strenuous (for those who want to climb the ridges!); bring lunch and liquids; meet at 9 a.m. at the Pioneer Inn in Clayton. Katie and Otto Haubensak will coordinate the hike; call them for details at 939-8608. No reservations necessary.

Always dress sensibly for the weather and wear sturdy shoes. Bring your own lunch and liquids for all-day hikes. Pocketbooks for flora and fauna identification are fun to bring along, as are binoculars; there is so much to see in our varied and fascinating county! If there is heavy rain the morning of a hike, it will be automatically cancelled, but, otherwise, it's on! "We've got to get owr yonder; so let's go!"

PARK PERSONALITY OF THE MONTH: MANNY LINDNER

Raydean Pandlett

Manny Lindner, president of the Park Council, has an interesting definition of vermin. He makes the conservationist's point succinctly: "If vermin are defined as being a form of life which finds the environment so much to its liking that it multiplies beyond all boundaries to the detriment of other life forms, then humans are vermin. If the Park Council could prevent people from being overly verminous, I think we would have achieved our goal."

Manny, a nuclear chemist with a Ph.D. from U.C. Berkeley, and membership in Phi Beta Kappa, joined the Park Council in 1965 because of his intense feelings about preserving Las Trampas; since that time he has been vice president three times and has given countless hours trying to get people to limit their boundaries so that other forms of life might survive. Manny firmly believes that the time has come for highly planned cities, built in a concentrated manner, which would allow for open space. "Without the land, we have nothing," he reminds us.

Manny married Bernice shortly after coming to Berkeley to enter graduate school. For more than twenty years he and his family (he has two sons, Mark and Bruce) have been active members of the Danville community.

The essence of Manny Lindner could be the opposite of his definition of vermin. He is an honest, unassuming human being committed to living without being a detriment to others.

SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE TO APPROVED GREEN BELTS

The approved Green Belt around London, England, is being increased by 15 per cent, according to Peter Walker, British Secretary of State for the Environment, as part of a review of the procedure for dealing with green belt proposals in a number of areas. "The objective is to speed up the processes to give permanent protection against development to as much green belt land as possible as quickly as possible, while ensuring that adequate scope is given for the preparation of plans which will meet present and future housing needs," he said. This will encourage developers to consentrate their efforts in areas where development can be expanded in order to meet the urgent need for more housing land. It is also hoped to initiate fresh work which will lead to new areas being given the protection of green belt status in development plans to be prepared by local planning authorities.

The total amount of land in England subject to green belt policies of all kinds is some 5,600 square miles, of which 1,800 square miles are already fully approved in development plans. The approved area includes some 850 square miles around London, 530 square miles in the West Riding, 270 square miles at Bristol, Bath and Gloucester, and 140 square miles in North Tyneside. As a result of the measures announced, there should be substantial increases in the area of approved green belt. In addition 600 square miles are already subject to interim safeguarding in approved development plans. This area should also be increased in the next few months.

Ministers in the Department of the Environment

Looking west up Stewartsville Valley, Coal Mines Regional Park. Stewartsville mine dump is at extreme right.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Nov. 10, Sat. - Sierra Club: Walt Goggin[illegible] takes you through Sunol Regional Park. Call Molly Reeves, 254-1428, for details.

Nov. 13, Tues. - EBRPD public hearing on the Park District's proposed Master Plan prepared by "Overview" with the Citizens' Task Force. Contra Costa County Water District auditorium, 2700 Concord Ave., Concord, 7:30 p.m.

Nov. 15, Thurs. - Park Council Board Meeting, Contra Costa Water District offices, 2700 Concord Ave., Concord, 8:00 p.m.

Nov. 17, Sat. - East County Indian Caves. Meet 1 p.m. Brentwood City Park. Family Hike. Reservations necessary. Call Dick Hackett at 634-2396 (Brentwood) or Sue Watson, 254-4077 (Orinda).

Nov. 17, 18, Sat. & Sun. - Overnight at Jughandle Creek, Mendocino. Sierra Club. Call Molly Reeves, 254-1428, for details.

Nov. 19, Mon. - Program meeting: Dr. Glen Seaborg will speak on his tour through China. Contra Costa Water District building, 2700 Concord Ave., Concord, 8:00 p.m.

Dec. 8, Sat. - Save San Francisco Bay Association workshop on "An End to Bay Fill - Illusion or Possibility?" Boalt Hall, University of California campus, Berkeley, 9:30 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. Call 849-3053 for more information about this important program.

Dec. 9, Sun. - Park Council hike. Black Diamond Mines Regional Historic Park. Meet 9 a.m. Pioneer Inn, Clayton. Moderate hike. Bring lunch and liquids. For details, call Katie and Otto Haubensak, 939-8608.

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are also anxious that further land should have protection of the kind afforded by green belts wherever this is practicable and desirable on normal planning grounds. Walker stated, "In addition to the concept of protecting land which encircles large towns, consideration should be given, where necessary and where the opportunity is present, to protecting wedges of open land extending from the surrounding countryside into the heart of towns." He added, "While the object of our green belts is to provide protection against development, this does not mean that there should simply be a negative approach to planning in these areas. The land should not simply be left idle and neglected. These areas can enhance the amenities and help in providing opportunities to the townsman for relaxation."

BREAKTHROUGH IN LAND USE?

Can we triple the use of our land? This is the question Norman B. Livermore, Administrator of the State Resources Agency, will discuss at a conference at the First Methodist Church, 1551 Montgomery Dr., Santa Rosa, on November 17.

The half-day conference is concerned with a new U.S. policy proclaimed in the Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1972 offering Federal grants of 75% from sanitary districts to irrigate crops in permanent farmland as one way to solve our problem of water pollution.

This policy could have far-reaching effects on nearly all Bay Area counties. Water for irrigation could produce a new and much needed fodder industry. Federal funds can go for land acquisition. This farmland could also provide communities with permanent open space or green belts to guide growth.

We urge all Park Council members to give their attention to this conference. Although the panel and speakers will deal mainly with Marin and Sonoma counties, Contra Costans will be able to examine the implications of the U.S. policy for our own county.

STAFF

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Park Council News

THE PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Manny Lindner

The president's column? There isn't any, really. But every now and then, something happens to spur a message spree. Today is one of those times.

This Sunday morning I went through my usual strenuous physical exercise of bending over to pick up three extra thick newspapers in my driveway. One of these papers we pay for, the others we get gratis--whether we like it or not. Usually we huff and snort and shake our heads. But this particular day carried a message of particular interest.

One of the newspapers carried a headline and somber suggestion that the night lights might be going out in our cities and towns as a result of our energy shortage. One of the other papers predicted possible catastrophe for those in the travel and recreation industries.

We conservationists can hardly say, "I told you so." Yet, the profligate use of our fossil fuels has twinged the consciences of many of us for years. Now we know what most of us somehow suspected: it can't go on indefinitely. Oil embargo or no, our gluttonous use of fuels is finished, because human beings will presumably have to inhabit this planet for untold thousands of years. Today our concern is oil. Tomorrow it will be other non-renewable natural resources which we have consumed at an alarming rate: iron ore, aluminum, timber, and land, to mention a few of the better-known resources.

It is to be hoped that we will apply the oil lesson to our other resources, that we will be more frugal, and that recycling will become a way of life. It is folly to wait until a critical shortage is upon us before we act, just as it is folly to permit excessive killing of certain animals and then, in a burst of noble indignation, to place them on an endangered species list.

Do we face serious problems in the future? It would probably take a very wise person to answer that. Are we willing to take the special ski buses up to the Sierras for a weekend? How about car-pooling when you want to spend a day at your favorite regional park? Things may never be quite so convenient again, but the outlook doesn't appear to be dire.

It is a certainty that we should develop new habits, perhaps an entirely different way of life, one in which we shall be mindful that there are people camping downstream as well as upstream. Perhaps if wise and careful use of our resources becomes a part of our existence, there will be little or no need for conservationists--because everyone will be a conservationist.

The OPEC nations are really trying to tell us much more than that we have an oil shortage. Let's hope we are all listening.

Oh yes, about those three big newspapers in my driveway; have you heard rumors of a paper shortage?

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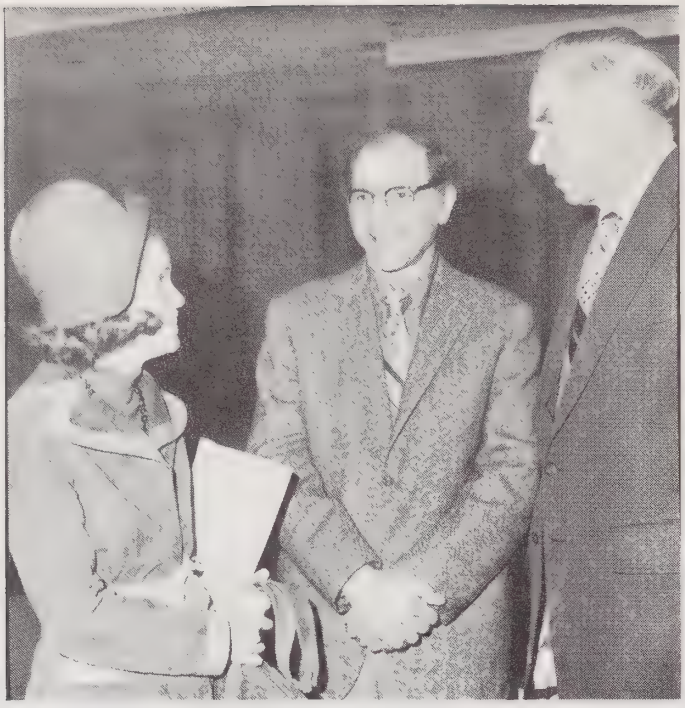
EXCELLENT RESPONSE TO "CHINA" PROGRAM

Raydean Randlett

A sizable audience gathered on November 19 to hear Dr. Seaborg's educational presentation of his visit to the People's Republic of China.

Dr. Seaborg, a member of the United States Committee for Scholarly Exchange with China, visited and lectured at scientific institutes, walked the Great Wall, and enjoyed the royal treatment afforded to him, his wife, and entire delegation by the people of China. The slides and movies which he showed allowed one to see immaculate cities with sprawling boulevards, communes, ancient artifacts, and the many ways "people power" can be used rather than cars, trucks, machines, etc.



(From left) Park Council News associate editor Raydean Randlett and president Manny Lindner discuss China with Dr. Glenn T. Seaborg.

China's concerted effort to become self-sufficient has caused her to eliminate flies, rats, most dogs and unfortunately even the birds. The birds were killed (to save grain) by high decibel noise at night which prevented them from sleeping. Feeding 700 million people takes priority over environmental concerns.

Dr. Seaborg related that the "speech" he heard most often from professors and peasants alike concerned itself with how poor conditions were before the "Liberation" and how much better life is now. Seaborg obviously admired what he called the "incredible honesty" of the people, the conscientious students who challenged him to call on every bit of information he has obtained as a Nobel laureate in Chemistry, and the adequate method which has been devised to bring medical care to China's huge population. The honesty showed up in the fact that a wallet could be left "anywhere" and someone would hasten to return it. The students listened intently for two hours. (The "barefoot doctor" is a paramedic who diagnoses common diseases, administers drugs, and recommends patients to the highly skilled doctors.)

The highlight of the visit for all of the Americans was a lengthy discussion with Chou En-lai, who agreed to exchanges which will take place in science, but not yet in the social sciences. The Chinese Premier commented on male chauvinism, progress in population control, pollution problems, and even "Watergate." Dr. Seaborg termed the visit a success and his presentation was also very well received.

CONSERVATION CAPSULES

Recycling Convention. The first California Recycling Convention, held in October at the San Francisco Jack Tar Hotel, was broadly attended, with 250 representatives of citizen's recycling groups, environmental recycling, and federal and local government -- all in attendance.

Cliff Humphrey, Keynote speaker, set the tone when he said, "Our per capita draw on earth's finite resources is now beyond what life can sustain." Recycling not only saves energy and resources but has a great educational value, which results in gradual consumer awareness of the enormous quantities of materials we are wasting.

An ad hoc assembly of delegates voted to organise a statewide boycott of plastics because, "The byproduct of this industry is a non-reusable container that is a hazard in landfill and water supplies." The importance of following Oregon's "Ban the Can" example was cited.

New Trail. A trail crossing Lake Chabot's dam will be opened to allow hikers and bicyclists to travel from Chabot Park to the Marina without using the dangerous Lake Chabot Road.

Save Antioch Dunes? A proposal has been submitted for 1974 State Park Bond Acting Funds to be used to preserve dunes and nearby marshlands which contain a unique wildlife habitat. The properties involved are presently zoned for industrial use even though only five of the original twenty-five acres remain unfilled.

Mt. Diablo Acquisition. William Penn Mott, Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation, has recommended the purchase of the Murchio property because of its desirability and iminent danger of development. Senator Nejedly said, "I am delighted at this...since I have been urging that the Murchio property be given top priority." It was originally contemplated that the North Peak be purchased, but that area is not in immediate danger of development.

Story of Las Trampas. The revised "Story of Las Trampas Regional Park," touching on such things as its history, mammals, birds, plants, and trails, is now available through the East Bay Regional Park District ($2.00).

COAL MINES ADVISORY COMMITTEE NEEDS YOU

Joann K. Johnson

Alone I wander through the Somersville cemetery, reading the epitaphs and forgotten names on the now-broken headstones. Looking out across the silent, wind-teased hills, the non-existent towns of Nortonville and Somersville become mirages of my mind. I hear a Gaelic song drifting upward from a spring-fed valley. It hangs for a moment on the silken silence before it fades.

Is it possible to share these interludes with others, within the boundaries of the soon-to-be-developed Coal Mines Regional Park? For the above reasons and many others, I am interested in setting up an advisory committee to give direction and guidance to the East Bay Regional Park District in the establishment of this historically and botanically significant 2000-plus acre park.

It is hoped that the cemetery can be restored. The project will require much research and searching. Would you like to be a part of this undertaking? Other questions revolve around: What mines should be open for public viewing? Should any of the original six town sites be recreated? How will the trails be used? What type of internal transportation will meet the needs of the public?

If you have any expertise in these areas, or if you just like outdoor park experience, please contact me, Joann K. Johnson, 283-1542, or 860 Paradise Court, Lafayette 94549. I also wish to begin a bibliography on the coal mines region of eastern Contra Costa County, so if you have reference material please include it. All information will be appreciated and shared.

MOUNTAIN

Joann Kathryn Johnson

I have come home to the mountain.
My soul is restored
My body and mind are once again whole
Here I know there is a purpose.

Your sun is my blanket
Your sky is my heaven
Your trees are my breath
Your birds and brook, my symphony
Your earth gives me rest

My heart beats with the joy of
Knowing that for this moment
I share in the solitude and beauty
Created by your magnificent presence.

No longer does this person feel alienated.
There is peace and comfort
So close to the sun, the sky, the trees,
The birds, the brook, the earth.

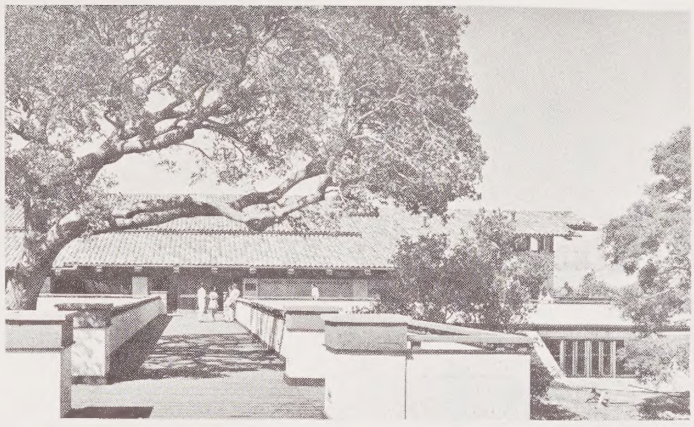
I must learn to live with them
Not they with me,
For if I cannot accept their design
I will suffer and be banished.

My body to be sacrificed to a foreign God
Of my own creation, who will
Blind my eyes
To the sight of the mountain
Deafen my ears
To the music of the birds and brook
Strangle my breath
With the stench of my own extinction

Return to the mountain
I must, I will.
This person has too long been
Separated from his origin

Earth, you are my true mother
Sun, sky, trees my nourishment
Birds and brook my companions

In the mountain rests my faith
Return I must, I will.



Shannon Park Community Center, close to the Alameda-Contra Costa County line, provides plenty of recreational opportunities for 28,000 people in San Ramon and Dublin.

SHANNON PARK COMMUNITY CENTER

Bounded by black oak and cottonwood trees, Shannon Park Community Center is accessible by walking through Shannon Park and crossing the footbridge over Shannon Creek.

The Community Center was designed to meet the leisure needs of the 28,000 persons of the Dublin-San Ramon area, as well as to house the Recreation Offices of the Valley Community Services District.

Shannon Park has a Teen Center open daily and during the evening for "drop-in" activities. It also serves as a game room, offering pool, table tennis, table soccer and chess.

The Community Center has an adult meeting room used by senior citizens for lectures and meetings, another room used for a variety of classes and a cultural arts center where one can take guitar and ceramics lessons and participate in fine arts seminars. This room also houses the pre-school programs.

The Social Hall offers the Valley community one of the largest and most complete rental facilities in the area, and can be used for parties, dances, receptions, dinners, stage productions and presentations. Kitchen facilities adjacent to the Social Hall are available for use by all classes and groups using the Community Center.

Dr. Seaborg (back to camera) answers questions from the large crowd that attended his talk on travels in the People's Republic of China.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Monday, December 24. Copy deadline for January newsletter.
Tuesday, December 25. Merry Christmas to all
Saturday, January 19th. See Frank's Tract in the Delta when the birdlife is at its peak. The river otters have made a comeback, and we shall see evidence of their slides and meir trails -- and, hopefully, we may see them. We shall also see the beaver construction works and many other wonders of the Delta world. Join us to tour a unique area which is fast becoming a wildlife preserve, but which is also under pressures of civilization.

Jane Helrich will lead this trip. Meet at 9:30 AM at the Jersey Island Ferry Slip. To reach this point, go through Oakley on old Highway 4. About 3 curves beyond Oakley turn toward Bethel Island. Cross Dutch Slough and watch for a small sign on the right to Jersey Island. Follow the old levee road to the ferry slip.

Reservations necessary -- limit 40 persons. Cost of $1.00 to pay the boatmen.

Call Jane Helrich at 688-8873 or Sue Watson at 254-4077 by January 16th. Cancellation in event of heavy rain or heavy fog.

There was an overwhelming response to the East County caves trip. Unfortunately, heavy rain forced cancellation. We are glad to know that you liked the idea of this trip, and if it is possible, your hiking committee will try to reschedule this trip in dryer weather.

ROUTES DELETED

Senator John A. Nejedly (R - Walnut Creek) announced Nov. 27 that he has been notified by James A. Moe, Director of the State Department of Transportation, that the Department's maps and records are being revised to delete portions of Route 77 and Route 93 from the State Highway System and California Freeway and Expressway System.

"The Legislature passed Senate Bills 492 and 1321 during the 1973 Session in response to the united efforts of the residents of Lafayette and Burton Valley, through which these routes would have crossed. The Department has assured me that since there is no authority for State highways within these corridors, the Department will not consider State highways as appropriate," stated the Senator.

"These deletions become effective January 1, 1974, and must be considered a victory for citizen action in Contra Costa County," concluded Nejedly.

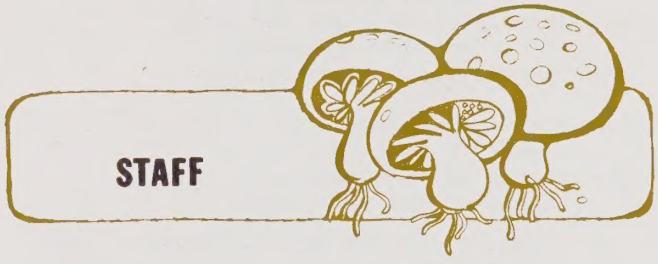
ENDORSEMENTS NEEDED FOR PARK COUNCIL GRANT

Park Council members and friends, especially members of the Sierra Club, are invited to write to the Council expressing support for a grant application that we are expecting to make. The purpose of the grant is to help defray the costs of publishing Park Council News.

At present, most of the revenues derived from membership dues and donations are spent on printing and mailing the newsletter. Writing, editing, photography, typesetting, and paste-up costs the Council nothing, since these services are donated by volunteers.

An adequate grant would free our funds for other valuable uses, making the Council even more effective.

Letters of support for the grant application should be sent to Patrick Whittle Associates, 1700 North Broadway, Walnut Creek, California 94596.



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